The Influence of Social Support for Online Learning Motivation

[1]Azrin Raimi Bin Ahmad., [*2]Nur Adibah Binti Zamri., [3]Muhammad Harriz Bin Zaini., [4]Eliyas Bin Sulaiman Mohandas., [5]Dean Yeo Kai Liang., [6]Noor Hanim Rahmat

[1,2, 4, 6]Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

[3]Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Jengka, Malaysia

[5]Faculty of Education, Language and Communication, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia

***Corresponding Author**

DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10200279

Received: 18 February 2026; Accepted: 23 February 2026; Published: 06 March 2026

ABSTRACT

Online learning continues to expand due to its accessibility and flexibility; however, sustaining learners' motivation in digital environments remains a challenge. This study aims to investigate the influence of social support on learners' motivation to learn online, alongside the roles of expectancy and value. A quantitative survey design was employed, involving 255 respondents from two Malaysian public universities representing the Science & Technology and Social Sciences & Humanities clusters. The instrument consisted of 37 items adapted from Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) and Fowler's Motivation to Learn Online Questionnaire (2018), and demonstrated strong reliability (overall Cronbach's α = .937). Findings show that learners perceived high levels of instructor support, strong task value, and strong control of learning beliefs, although their self-efficacy and social engagement varied depending on task complexity and online interaction. Correlation analyses revealed strong positive relationships among expectancy, value, and social support, indicating that online learning motivation is shaped collectively by cognitive beliefs and interpersonal support. No significant differences were found across universities or clusters. The study highlights the importance of emotional, instructional, and peer-based support in fostering a more engaging and motivating online learning experience.

Keywords: Online Learning, Motivation, Social Support, Expectancy, Value, Instructor Support, Self-Efficacy, Task Value

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

Online learning has become one of the most needed educational approaches and has rapidly expanded. It offers flexibility and accessibility to all levels of learners. However, learners still face challenges in sustaining motivation in digital environments. Sometimes, when learners are too attached to the online environment, they feel less interaction with each other. Sometimes they feel isolated and find it hard to maintain focus. Motivation is actually the most important factor for success in online learning as it can influence persistence, achievement and engagement. Therefore, this study aims to examine how social support contributes to learners' motivation in online contexts, highlighting the interplay among individual beliefs, perceived value, and external encouragement.

The title of this study emphasises *social support* and *online learning motivation*. Social support refers to the emotional, academic and instructional guidance that learners receive from everyone, including their friends, teachers or lecturers and their learning community. The presence of social elements is important in online learning as it can help learners to foster inclusion and engagement (Garrison et al., 2000). However, motivation as described by Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), is shaped by expectancy (belief in success), instrumentality (belief in rewards), and valence (value of outcomes. In online learning, learners will feel motivated to learn when

they get support from their teachers and friends. This proves that social support is important to sustain learners' motivation.

Although many studies have investigated online learning motivation, the role of social support remains highly relevant in today's educational environments. As digital platforms become more reliant in today's era, learners' success relies not only on self-belief and task value but also on supportive networks that foster persistence. Recent research also shows the importance of teachers' presence and emotional engagement in reducing the number of students quitting schools and improving learning outcomes. Thus, exploring how social support influences online learning motivation offers valuable insights for creating more effective and inclusive digital learning environments.

Statement of Problem

Many recent studies on online learning motivation continuously highlighted the importance of expectancy, value and social support in sustaining learner engagement. For example, Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1994) has been widely applied in many studies. Based on that theory, motivation depends on belief in success, rewards and outcome value. Another study conducted by Fowler (2018) highlighted that self-efficacy, learning control beliefs, and task value strongly predict persistence in online learning. On the other hand, social and teaching presence are essential to maintain motivation in digital learning and reduce the feeling of being isolated (Garrison et al. 2000).

Although certain findings have been established, the role of social support in online learning motivation is still not fully understood. It is because social support has often been overlooked in studies as compared to expectancy and value. Learners who do not feel a part of their groups or teachers tend to feel less motivated and disengaged. According to Rahmat (2025), it is important to instil emotional engagement in learners' lives as it can help learners feel connected to the online classes. This suggests that social support is one of the key factors driving motivation in online learning.

The research gap lies in understanding how social support interacts with expectancy and value in different programmes or subjects offered by different universities. Recent studies have suggested that researchers should explore and focus more on how motivation differs across subjects and universities. This can help researchers see how support systems help learners to keep going. Highlighting the gap provides the reason why this study has been conducted. This study would like to investigate the influence of social support towards online learning motivation. On the other hand, this study would like to examine whether differences exist across universities and clusters. This focus directly leads to the research objectives and questions, which aim to determine the relationships among expectancy, value, and social support, and to test their significance across diverse learner groups.

Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore the influence of social support for online learning motivation. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions;

- How do learners perceive social support for online motivation?
- How do learners perceive expectancy for online motivation?
- How do learners perceive value for online motivation?
- Is there a relationship between all factors for online motivation?

(H1- There is no relationship between all factors for online motivation)

- Is there a significant relationship for all factors across universities?

(H2- There is no significant relationship between all factors across universities)

- Is there a significant relationship for all factors across clusters?

(H3- There is no significant relationship for all factors across clusters)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study applies Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) as the theoretical framework. This theory explains motivation as a cognitive process influenced by individuals' beliefs about effort, performance, and outcomes. The theory is widely applied in educational research to understand learners' motivation, specifically in learning environments that require autonomy and sustained engagement, such as online learning.

According to Vroom (1964), motivation is determined by three main components which are expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. The first component, expectancy can be referred to as an individual's belief that the effort they exert will lead to successful performance. In the online learning context, expectancy reflects learners' confidence in their ability to understand course content, complete online learning tasks, and perform well in assessments. When learners believe that their efforts can lead to academic success, they are more likely to stay motivated and engaged in online learning activities. Vo and Ho (2024) mentioned that expectancy beliefs play an important role in shaping the engagement and persistence of learners in online learning environment.

The second component, instrumentality, is a belief that successful performance will result in specific outcomes or rewards. For online learners, these outcomes may include good grades, academic recognition, skill development, or future educational and career benefits. Motivations among the learners are higher when they recognise a clear connection between their performance in online learning tasks and the rewards they will receive once the tasks are completed. According to Amir et al. (2023), studies in educational settings have supported that instrumentality has significant relation with learning motivation, thus emphasising its relevance as a motivational component in the contexts of academics.

The third component, valence, is stated as the value or importance individuals place on the anticipated outcomes. In the settings of online learning, valence is reflected in how meaningful, useful, or desirable learners perceive the learning outcomes to be. Learners who value the outcomes of online learning, whether intrinsically or extrinsically, have more possibility to demonstrate higher motivation levels. Recent studies have discovered that the perceptions of value, together with expectancy beliefs, are significant in influencing learners' motivation and engagement in online learning environments (Zahid et al., 2024).

Motivation in Vroom's expectation Theory is defined as the cumulative impact of three interrelated cognitive evaluations: expectation, instrumentality, and valence (Vroom, 1964; Zajda, 2023). Expectancy denotes a learner's conviction that their effort will result in successful achievement. In online learning contexts, this conviction is particularly crucial since students depend significantly on self-regulated learning abilities to traverse digital material, fulfill task requirements, and address technological obstacles. Recent research indicates that learners' confidence in their capacity to finish online activities profoundly influences their readiness to engage and persevere, so establishing expectancy as a crucial factor in online learning motivation (Jenal et al., 2025).

Instrumentality denotes a learner's belief that successful performance will result in favorable consequences. In virtual learning environments, this may encompass concrete accomplishments such as high grades, accolades, or skill enhancement. Recent research indicates that when students recognize distinct connections between their performance and significant academic benefits, their study efforts correspondingly intensify (Permzadian & Shen, 2024). This corresponds with Vroom's initial assertion that individuals exhibit greater motivation when they believe their accomplishment will yield desirable outcomes.

Valence denotes the significance or worth attributed to anticipated results. Students are more motivated to engage when they perceive learning challenges as relevant, advantageous, or congruent with their long-term objectives. Recent research has consistently emphasized the significance of meaningful and valuable learning content in maintaining students' motivation for online learning (Jenal et al., 2025; Izni et al., 2024).

These three components operate collaboratively, rather than individually. Motivation is most potent when learners possess a strong belief in their potential for success (high expectation), have confidence that accomplishment will result in favorable results (high instrumentality), and really appreciate those outcomes (high valence). Recent research in Malaysian higher education indicates that anticipation, value, and social support strongly interact to influence online learning motivation, highlighting the necessity of fostering all three to maintain student engagement (Izni et al., 2024). Consequently, Vroom's theory continues to serve as a pertinent and robust framework for elucidating motivation in digital learning contexts, where clarity, support, and significant learning experiences are crucial for sustaining student persistence.

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) model as proposed by Garrison et al. (2000) provides a theoretical framework for the successful design and delivery of online and blended learning. It posits that a meaningful and deep educational experience occurs at the intersection of three vital elements: cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence. Firstly, cognitive presence is the extent to which learners can construct meaning through sustained reflection and discourse. In an online environment, cognitive presence is often achieved through a cycle of inquiry that begins with a triggering event (a problem or question), followed by exploration, integration of ideas, and resolution of the problem. Secondly, social presence refers to the ability of participants to project their individual personalities and characteristics into the online community. It is essential for creating a supportive environment where students feel comfortable communicating with peers and instructors, thereby reducing the sense of isolation often associated with digital learning. It includes affective expression, open communication, and the development of group synergy. Lastly, teaching presence involves the design, facilitation, and direction of the cognitive and social processes to achieve meaningful learning outcomes. It begins with the instructor's design of the online course that continues through discussions and delivery of instruction to ensure students stay focused and motivated.

Past Studies

Past Studies on Motivation to Learn Online

A study conducted by Mok et al. (2025) employed a quantitative method to examine how value, expectancy, and social support shape online learning motivation by using Bandura's (2012) Social Cognitive Theory and Fowler's (2018) motivation framework for online learning. The survey instrument used a 5-point Likert scale with four sections distributed to 229 selected participants. Findings show that value strongly enhances motivation, while expectancy boosts confidence and belief in success. On the other hand, learners' performance in online learning has been improved due to social support including instructor guidance and peer interaction.

Another study conducted by Lokman et al. (2022) applied Vroom's Expectancy Theory to Malaysian learners. This study is conducted to investigate expectancy, instrumentality and valence in relation to online learning motivation. The study adopted the quantitative approach where the survey is used to collect the data. The survey was distributed to 70 participants in Diploma level in one of public universities. The survey consisting of 8 sections on demographic profile including motivation scale where values, expectancy and affective components were posed. The results showed that learners will be motivated when they believe that their effort would lead to success, then the success would bring rewards and the rewards were meaningful to them.

In summary, past studies highlighted the importance of expectancy, value, and social support in online learning motivation. Lokman et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of expectancy and value while Mok et al (2025) stressed the role of social and emotional support. Here, the findings show that motivation in online learning is actually very important and is not just about one thing, it is actually required both, internal belief and external support systems.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

When it comes to online learning, sometimes learners need motivation to stay focussed. They may be able to attend to other tasks while staying in the online class. Sometimes online learning can be lonely to the learners as they are not physically engaging with their peers or the instructor. According to Rahmat (2025), online learners need emotional engagement to stay connected to the online classes. Figure 1 below shows the conceptual framework of the study. This study explores the influence of social support for online motivation. The framework is anchored from Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory which states that learners' motivation depends on expectancy, value, social support. The motivation factors in Vroom (1964) are used as variables in this study and the constructs are supported by Fowler's (2018) to support online learning motivation. To begin with, the variable expectancy is supported by Fowler's (2018) constructs such as (i) self-efficacy and (ii) control of learning beliefs. Next, the variable value is supported by Fowler's (2018) constructs such as (i) intrinsic goal orientation, (ii) extrinsic goal orientation and (iii) task value. Lastly, the variable social support is supported by Fowler's (2018) constructs such as (i) social engagement, and (ii)instructor support. Additionally, this study also explores if there is a relationship between all the factors.

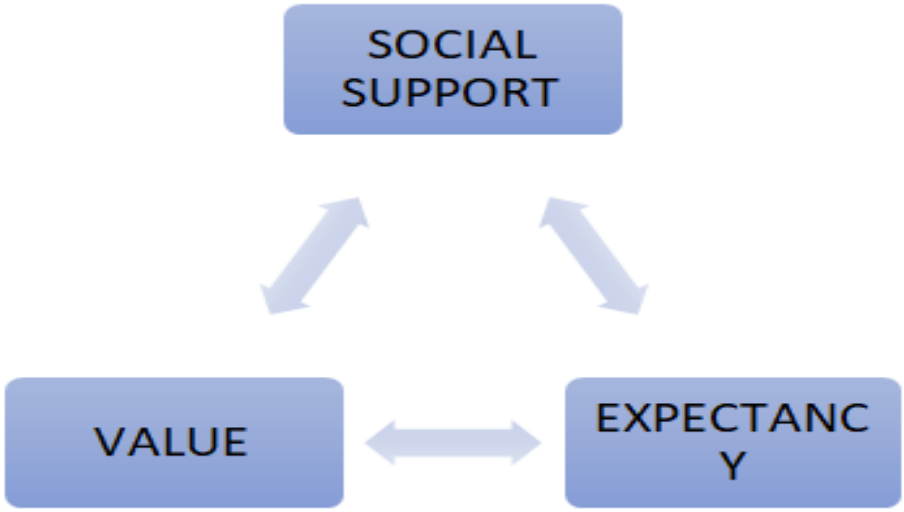

Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study

The Influence of Social Support for Online Learning Motivation

METHODOLOGY

The study explores the influence of social support on online learning motivation by employing a quantitative survey design. Through a convenience sampling method, 255 participants from two universities (one is located in Selangor and the other is in Sarawak) were selected as the respondents of the study. The respondents were also classified based on the academic clusters (Science & Technology; Social Sciences & Humanities), with most of them being full time and senior students.

Instrument

A structured questionnaire, adapting Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory and Fowler's (2018) Motivation to Learn Online Questionnaire, was constructed and used as the instrument, employing a 5-point Likert scale to collect data. The questionnaire was constructed in four main sections. Section A records demographic data.

Table 1 below shows the categories used for the Likert scale; 1 is for Never, 2 is for Seldom, 3 is for Sometimes, 4 is for Often and 5 is for Almost Always.

Table 1- Likert Scale Use

1	Never
2	Seldom
3	Sometimes
4	Often
5	Almost Always

Table 2- Distribution of Items in the Survey

SECTION	VARIABLE MOTIVATION	CONSTRUCT	NO OF ITEMS	TOT ITEMS	Cronbach Alpha
B	EXPECTANCY	Self-Efficacy	7	11	.850
		Control of Learning Beliefs	4		
C	VALUE	Intrinsic Goal Orientation	4	14	.872
		Extrinsic Goal Orientation	4		
		Task Value	6		
D	SOCIAL SUPPORT	Social Engagement	5	12	.885
		Instructor Support	7		
				37	.937

Table 2 also shows the distribution of items in the survey. The core variables in this study (expectancy, value, and social support) are measured in sections B, C, and D. In total, as shown in Table 2, there were 37 measurement items in this questionnaire, across sections B-D.

Section B: Expectancy (Total = 11 items)

Section B quantifies learners' expectancy for online learning motivation utilising two domains: Self-Efficacy and Control of Learning Beliefs. The former consists of seven items that measure learners' confidence in understanding online learning materials and performing well in online assessments. The latter consists of four items that gauge learners' beliefs that effort and suitable study strategies can result in learning success. Thus, Section B consists of a total of 11 items to embody the expectancy variable.

Section C: Value (Total = 14 items)

Section C quantifies learners' value for online learning motivation utilising three domains: Intrinsic Goal Orientation, Extrinsic Goal Orientation and Task Value. Intrinsic Goal Orientation contains four items that gauge learners' internal interest in learning (e.g., curiosity and preference for challenging learning materials). Extrinsic Goal Orientation contains 4 items that gauge learners' motivation driven by external outcomes (e.g., grades, recognition, and demonstrating ability). Task Value contains six items that gauge learners' perceptions of the usefulness, importance, and interest of course content. Thus, Section C consists of a total of 14 items to embody the value variable.

Section D: Social Support (Total = 12 items)

Section D quantifies social support for online learning motivation utilising two domains: Social Engagement and Instructor Support. The former consists of five items that gauge learners' interaction, engagement, and sense of connection with friends during online learning. The latter consists of seven items that gauge learners' perceptions of instructor responsiveness, clarity of expectations, guidance, feedback, and facilitation of learning. Thus, Section D consists of a total of 12 items to embody the social support variable.

Overall Total Items

To sum, the survey consists of 37 motivation-related measurement items throughout the three main variables: Expectancy (11 items), Value (14 items), and Social Support (12 items). Only items in sections B, C, and D were quantified to make the 37 items. Section A, demographic data, is not included in the 37 items because they were used to describe the participant profile but not to gauge the constructs of motivation.

Table 3 Reliability Levels, Cronbach's Alpha Ranges, and Their Interpretations

Reliability Level	Cronbach's Alpha range	Interpretation
Excellent	0.9 and above	Indicates very high internal consistency
Good	0.80-0.89	Reflects strong internal consistency
Acceptable	0.70-0.79	Indicates acceptable internal consistency
Questionable	0.60-0.69	Reflects questionable internal consistency
Poor	Below 0.6	Indicates poor internal consistency

In order to determine the internal reliability of the instrument, reliability analysis is one. Table 4 above shows the distribution and interpretation of Cronbach Alpha range. According to Ahmad,et.al. (2024), Cronbach Alpha scores between 0.7 to 0.9 is considered acceptable to excellent.

Table 2 also shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach alpha of .850 for Expectancy, .872 for Value, and .885 for Social Support. the overall Cronbach Alpha for all 37 items is .937;, thus, revealing a good reliability of the instrument chosen/used. Further analysis using SPSS is done to present findings to answer the research questions for this study.

FINDINGS

Demographic Analysis

According to Zienefuss, et.al (2021), researchers report demographic data in percentages to establish sample representatives, and allow for generalizability to a larger population. The reporting also provides an overview of participants' characteristics. Percentages offer a clear and understandable picture of the sample makeup.

Table 4- Percentage for Demographic Profile

Question	Demographic Profile	Categories	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	36%
		Female	64%

2	University	University A	58%
		University B	42%
2	Cluster	Science & Technology	38%
		Social Sciences & Humanities	62%
4	Mode of Study	Full-Time	97%
		Part-Time	3%
5	Type of student	Fresh student (Semester 1 or 2)	11%
		Senior Student (Semester 3 and above)	88%

Table 4 shows the respondents' demographic profile which includes gender, institutional affiliation, academic cluster, study mode and type of student. According to the table, 64% of the respondents were female, while 36% were male. Next, for the institutional affiliation, 58% of the respondents were from University A, which is located in Peninsular Malaysia while 42% were from University B, located in East Malaysia. Then, for the academic cluster, 62% of the respondents enrolled in the Social Sciences and Humanities cluster, followed by the cluster of Science and Technology with 38%. For study mode, most of the respondents were full-time students with 97%, whereas only 3% of them were part-time students. Lastly, in terms of student type, senior students in Semester 3 and above accounted for the largest percentage of the sample (88%), while fresh students in Semester 1 or 2 comprised 11% of the respondents.

Descriptive Statistics

Why is there a need to report the mean and standard deviation? According to Vetter (2017), Mean (M) represents the average, or centre of a data set. Standard deviation (SD) indicates the typical distance of individual observations from the mean which shows the data's variability or spread. A low SD means the data points are clustered close to the mean whole a high. SD indicates they are more spread out. It is good to have a high SD.

Findings for Social Support

This section presents data to answer research question 1- How do learners perceive social support for online motivation? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) social engagement, and (ii) instructor support.

Table 5- Mean for Social Engagement (SSE)

Statement	Mean	SD
SISSEQ1 feel "disconnected" from my teacher and fellow students in classes.	3.35	1.15
SSEQ2I pay attention in classes.	3.98	0.72
SSEQ3I enjoy class discussions.	3.95	0.89
SSEQ4I feel like I can freely communicate with other students in classes.	3.78	0.97
SSEQ5I have strong relationships with fellow students in this course.	3.80	0.95

According to the results in **Table 5**, students indicate predominantly elevated levels of positive social engagement (SSE), especially regarding their concentration and satisfaction in the classroom setting. The greatest mean score was seen for **SSEQ 2** (M = 3.98, SD = 0.72), signifying that attentiveness in class is the

most prevalent behavior among students, closely followed by **SSEQ 3** (*M* = 3.95, *SD* = 0.89), which indicates a pronounced pleasure of class discussions. Students see their peer connections positively, indicating robust relationships (**SSEQ 5**, *M* = 3.80) and effective communication (**SSEQ 4**, *M* = 3.78). The results for SISSEQ 1 indicate a significant divergence; with a mean of 3.35 and the highest standard deviation in the dataset (*SD* = 1.15), there is considerable disagreement among students concerning feelings of "disconnection." This suggests that while the majority are engaged, a portion of the class may still experience isolation despite the predominantly interactive environment.

Table 6- Mean for Instructor Support (SIS)

Statement	Mean	SD
SISQ1I feel like I can freely communicate with the instructor in this class.	3.96	0.81
SISQ2The instructor responds to questions, clearly, completely, and in a timely manner.	4.29	0.69
SISQ3The instructor's expectations for me in this class are clear.	4.07	0.78
SISQ4The instructor provides the guidance I need to be successful in this class.	4.24	0.72
SISQ5The instructor presents the material in a way that makes it relevant to me.	4.26	0.70
SISQ6In this course, I have the freedom to guide my own learning	4.19	0.73
SISQ7The instructor provides regular feedback that helps me gauge my performance in this class.	4.08	0.80

According to the study of **Table 6,** students evaluate the level of **Instructor Support (SIS)** as remarkably high, especially with the instructor's responsiveness and pedagogical clarity. The highest rating was awarded to **SISQ 2** (*M* = 4.29, *SD* = 0.69), indicating that students strongly concur that the instructor responds to inquiries clearly and promptly. This is corroborated by elevated results for **SISQ 5** (*M* = 4.26), signifying that the course material is delivered in a pertinent and captivating manner. Although all items received favorable scores, **SISQ 1** exhibited the lowest mean (*M* = 3.96, *SD* = 0.81), indicating that while students value the instructor's guidance and feedback, they perceive a marginally reduced freedom to initiate communication relative to their positive assessment of the instructor's responsiveness once contact is established.

Findings for Expectancy

This section presents data to answer research question 2- How do learners perceive expectancy for online motivation? In the context of this study this is measured by (i) self-efficacy and (ii) control of learning beliefs.

Table 7- Mean for SELF- EFFICACY (ESE)

Statement	Mean	SD
ESEQ 1 I believe I'll receive excellent grades in my classes.	3.66	0.79
ESEQ2I'm certain I can understand the most difficult material presented in the readings.	3.31	0.79
ESEQ3I'm confident I can learn the basic concepts that are being taught.	4.00	0.74
ESEQ4I'm confident I can understand the most complex material presented by the instructor online.	3.34	0.87

ESEQ5I'm confident I can do an excellent job on assessments online	3.82	0.78
ESEQ6 I'm certain I can master the skills being taught online.	3.45	0.84
ESEQ7 Although online classes can be challenging, I think I can do well.	3.64	0.87

Table 7 presents the mean scores for learners' perceptions of self-efficacy. The data indicates that students feel most confident in their ability to grasp foundational knowledge, as item ESEQ3 ("confident I can learn the basic concepts") recorded the highest mean of 4.00 (SD=0.74). Conversely, the lowest mean score of 3.31 (SD=0.79) was recorded for item ESEQ2, suggesting that students are less certain about their ability to comprehend the most difficult reading materials. While students generally believe they can achieve good grades (M=3.66) and perform well despite the challenges of online classes (M=3.64), the varying mean scores between 3.31 and 4.00 suggest that their confidence fluctuates depending on the complexity of the task or material.

Table 8-Mean for CONTROL OF LEARNING BELIEFS (ECB)

Statement	Mean	SD
ECBQ1If I study in appropriate ways, then I'll be able to learn the material.	4.05	0.79
ECBQ2It's my own fault if I don't learn the material taught.	4.12	0.83
ECBQ3If I try hard enough, then I'll understand the material presented.	4.29	0.67
ECBQ4If I don't understand the material presented, it's because I didn't try hard enough.	4.15	0.80

The findings for learners' control of learning beliefs, as shown in Table 8, reveal a high level of perceived personal responsibility for academic outcomes. All four items in this category achieved mean scores above 4.00, indicating strong agreement among the respondents. The highest mean of 4.29 (SD=0.67) was found in item ECBQ3, where students believe that they will understand the material presented if they try hard enough. This is followed closely by students' not understanding is a result of a lack of effort (M=4.15) and the belief that failing to learn is their own fault (M=4.12). The lowest mean, though still significantly high at 4.05 (SD=0.79), was recorded for item ECBQ1 regarding studying in appropriate ways. Overall, these results suggest that learners strongly attribute their success in online learning to their own effort and study habits.

Findings for Value

This section presents data to answer research question 3-How do learners perceive value for online motivation? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) intrinsic goal orientation, (ii) extrinsic goal orientation and (iii) task value.

Table 9- Mean for Intrinsic Goal Orientation (VI)

Statement	Mean	SD
VIQ1I prefer online material that really challenges me, so I can learn new things.	3.21	0.93
VIQ2I prefer online material that arouses my curiosity, even if it's difficult to learn.	3.47	0.90
VIQ3The most satisfying thing for me is trying to understand the online content as thoroughly as possible.	3.7	0.87
VIQ4I choose assignments that I can learn from even if they don't guarantee a good grade.	3.40	1.01

Table 9 depicts the mean for Intrinsic Goal Orientation (VI). Item VIQ3, **"The most satisfying thing for me is trying to understand the online content as thoroughly as possible"** reported the strongest intrinsic tendency (Mean= 3.7 and SD = 0.87), suggesting that deep understanding as a personally satisfying goal in online learning is still valued by many students. The second highest mean was item VIQ2 (prefer online material that arouses my curiosity, even if it's difficult to learn) with a mean of 3.47 and SD = 0.9, followed by item VIQ4 (choose assignments that I can learn from even if they don't guarantee a good grade) with a mean of 3.4 and SD = 1.01. However, item VIQ1, **"Prefer online material that really challenges me, so I can learn new things"** reported the lowest intrinsic tendency with a mean of 3.21 and SD = 0.93.

Table 10- Mean for Extrinsic Goal Orientation(VE)

Statement	Mean	SD
VEQ 1Getting a good grade is the most satisfying thing for me.	4.65	0.65
VEQ2 I want to do well in my classes so that I can get awards and recognition.	4.25	0.94
VEQ3 I want to get better grades than most of the other students in my classes.	4.14	0.96
VEQ4 I want to do well in my classes because it's important to show my ability to my family, friends, employer, or others.	4.40	0.88

Table 10 highlights the mean for Extrinsic Goal Orientation (EV). VEQ1 ("Getting a good grade is the most satisfying thing for me") shows the highest mean of 4.65, SD = 0.65. The second-highest mean is VEQ4, "I want to do well in my classes because it's important to show my ability to my family, friends, employer, or others." with a mean of 4.40, SD = 0.88 followed by Item 2 "I want to do well in my classes so that I can get awards and recognition." as a mean of 4.25, SD=0.65. Lastly, VEQ3 "I want to get better grades than most of the other students in my classes," shows the lowest mean score (M = 4.14, SD = 0.96)

Table 11- Mean for Task Value (VT)

Statement	Mean	SD
VTQ1I think I will be able to use what I learn in this course in other courses.	4.07	0.76
VTQ2It is important for me to learn the course material in this class.	4.24	0.71
VTQ3I am very interested in the content area of this course.	4.07	0.73
VTQ4I think the course material in this class is useful for me to learn.	4.13	0.71
VTQ5I like the subject matter of this course.	4.02	0.74
VTQ6Understanding the subject matter of this course is very important to me.	4.23	0.70

Table 11 tabulates the mean scores for the Task Value (VT). Based on the table, the results show a high level of perceived task value among the respondents, with the mean scores ranging from 4.02 to 4.24. Item VTQ2, "It is important for me to learn the course material in this class.", has the highest mean score (M = 4.24, SD = 0.71), followed closely by item VTQ6, "Understanding the subject matter of this course is very important to me." (M = 4.23, SD = 0.70). Item VTQ3, "I am very interested in the content area of this course.", and item VTQ4, "I think the course material in this class is useful for me to learn." also received relatively high ratings (M = 4.07, SD = 0.73; M = 4.13, SD = 0.71). Although still high, the item that recorded the lowest mean score is item VTQ5, "I like the subject matter of this course.", with the score of M = 4.02, SD = 0.74. Overall, the relatively

small standard deviation values suggest consistent responses, demonstrating that students generally perceived the course as valuable and important for their learning.

Exploratory Statistics

According to He (2024), correlation is a statistical technique that shows how strongly two variables are related to each other or the degree of association between the two. It's a common tool for describing simple relationships without making a statement about cause and effect. This section presents data to answer research questions on correlation. To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between all factors for online motivation, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in table 12 below.

Findings for Relationship between all factors for online motivation

This section presents data to answer research question 4-Is there a relationship between all factors for online motivation?

(H1- There is no relationship between all factors for online motivation)

To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, social and affective strategies data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in table 12 below.

Table 12- Correlation between Social Support and Expectancy Components

		EXPECTANCY	VALUE	SOCIAL SUPPORT
EXPECTANCY	Pearson (Correlation	1	.696**	.574**
	Sig (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001
	N	255	255	255
VALUE	Pearson (Correlation	.696**	1	.632**
	Sig (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001
	N	255	255	255
SOCIAL SUPPORT	Pearson (Correlation	.574**	.632**	
	Sig (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	
	N	255	255	255

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 12 shows there is an association between expectancy and social support. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between expectancy and social support (r=.574**) and (p=.<.001). According to He (2024), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between expectancy and social support.

Table 12 also shows there is an association between expectancy and value. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between expectancy and value (r=.696**) and (p=.<.001). According to He (2024), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak

positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between expectancy and value.

Lastly, with reference to Table 12, there is an association between value and social support. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between value and social support (r=.632**) and (p=.<.001). According to He (2024), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between value and social support.

Hence, null hypothesis is rejected as there is a relationship between all factors for online motivation.

Inferential Statistics

According to He (2024), there are three main functions of a T-test and ANOVA. Firstly, both are done to compare means. This test is also done to determine if the average scores (mean) or values of two groups, or one group against a known value, are different enough to be considered statistically meaningful and are not just due to random chance. Secondly, T-test and ANOVA are done to test hypotheses. Researchers use t-tests and ANOVA to test hypotheses about means, such as whether a new treatment significantly impacts a variable or if there's a difference in performance between two distinct groups. Lastly, T-test and ANOVA are done to identify significant differences. The output of a t-test provides a p-value (significance value). If this p-value is below a predetermined threshold (often 0.05), it indicates a statistically significant difference, allowing researchers to draw conclusions about the populations from which their samples were drawn.

Findings for Significant Differences for all factors across universities

- Is there a significant relationship for all factors across universities?

(H2- There is no significant relationship between all factors across universities)

Table 13- T-Test for all factors across universities

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
						Significance				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
EXPECTANCY	Equal variances assumed	2.600	.108	1.257	253	.105	.210	.08058	.06411	-.04567	.20684
	Equal variances not assumed			1.285	244.430	.100	.200	.08058	.06269	-.04290	.20406
VALUE	Equal variances assumed	1.691	.195	-.073	253	.471	.942	-.00471	.06457	-.13187	.12245
	Equal variances not assumed			-.075	247.235	.470	.940	-.00471	.06280	-.12841	.11898
SOCIAL_SUPPORT	Equal variances assumed	1.625	.204	-.408	253	.342	.683	-.02879	.07050	-.16763	.11005
	Equal variances not assumed			-.413	236.746	.340	.680	-.02879	.06976	-.16622	.10864

With reference to table 13, T-test was performed on all factors (expectancy, value and social support) across universities.

There was no significant difference for all factors across universities. Specifically, factors such as Expectancy (F=2.600,p=0.105), Value (F=1.691, p=0.471) and Social Support (F=1.625,p=0.342) all show no significant differences. So, null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings for Significant Differences for all factors across clusters

- Is there a significant relationship for all factors across clusters?

(H3- There is no significant relationship for all factors across clusters)

Table 14- T-test for All Factors across Clusters

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
						Significance		Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Difference	Difference	Lower	Upper
EXPECTANCY	Equal variances assumed	.948	.331	-.627	253	.266	.531	-.04104	.06545	-.16994	.08786
	Equal variances not assumed			-.607	180.583	.272	.544	-.04104	.06758	-.17439	.09230
VALUE	Equal variances assumed	2.824	.094	-.547	253	.293	.585	-.03594	.06573	-.16538	.09351
	Equal variances not assumed			-.519	168.977	.302	.604	-.03594	.06924	-.17262	.10074
SOCIAL_SUPPORT	Equal variances assumed	1.788	.182	-1.599	253	.055	.111	-.11430	.07147	-.25506	.02645
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.573	190.090	.059	.117	-.11430	.07265	-.25762	.02901

With reference to table 14, a T-test was performed to all factors (expectancy, value and social support) across clusters. There was no significant difference for all factors across clusters. Specifically, factors such as Expectancy (F=0.948,p=0.531), Value (F=2.824, p=0.585) and Social Support (F=1.788,p=0.111) all show no significant differences. So, null hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings and Discussions

The findings of the study are summarised in this section, based on the four research questions and discusses how these findings agree with past studies discussed in literature review. The focus of the discussion is on how social support, expectancy, and value in online learning are perceived by learners, and how these domains shaped online learning motivation through their synergy.

RQ1: How do learners perceive social support for online motivation?

The findings show that the learners demonstrated positive levels of social engagement and instructor support. In this realm, instructor related items were perceived the highest, followed by peer communication and relationships. Overall, learners indicated that while experiencing moderate levels of connection with peers, they also received adequate guidance, timely feedback, and clear expectations from their instructor.

This finding agrees with the study conducted by Jenal et al. (2025) that in sustaining students' motivation to learn online, instructor support and feedback played a significant role, especially in situations where physical interaction is limited. Likewise, the finding is aligned with Izni et al. (2024), who discovered that social support is significantly correlated with learners' motivation to engage online. This social support includes social presence and collaborative interaction. These studies advocate that social support stays an important factor of an effective online learning ecosystem.

RQ2: How do learners perceive expectancy for online motivation?

In general, the results show that learners have a strong sense of responsibility over their learning beliefs and a moderate level of self-efficacy. Learners perceived themselves as responsible for their learning outcomes and

although confidence varied based on the task level of difficulty, they believed that effort would result in success. This is in accordance with findings from Amir et al. (2023), who found that learners' motivation is significantly influenced by expectancy (belief in one's ability) and instrumentality (belief that effort leads to performance). Moreover, the result is also aligned with the suggestion made by Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) on effort-performance beliefs as central drivers of motivation.

RQ3: How do learners perceive value for online motivation?

The findings exhibit that the usefulness and relevance of online course content is highly valued by the learners, with strong ratings across task value and extrinsic goal orientation. Intrinsic motivation was comparably lower, eventhough present, especially for items portraying preference for highly challenging tasks. This finding agrees with Jenal et al. (2025), who discovered that learners were predominantly motivated by extrinsic goals rather than internal interest alone. It also resonates with Izni et al. (2024), who identified value as a core element of online learning motivation. These outcomes promote that learners remain to place heightened attention on how online learning reinforces their academic progression and long-term objectives.

RQ4: Is there a relationship between all factors for online motivation?

The result of the correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between expectancy, value and social support. This can be interpreted that learners are more likely to value the learning material (value) and respond positively to support systems (social support) when they strongly believe that they can perform (expectancy). This outcome aligns with Jenal et al. (2025), who discovered significant correlations among the same three motivational components. The finding is also in accordance with Izni et al. (2024), who indicated that expectancy, value, and social support together form and emphasise motivation in Malaysian higher education settings. Additionally, the interdependence displayed in this study reflects the constructs promoted in Vroom's Expectancy Theory, where motivation arises when individuals believe their works will produce valued outcomes and that the learning environment reinforces their result.

In summary, social support, expectancy, and value are perceived positively by learners, and they are strongly associated in shaping and forming online learning motivation. Previous studies consistently support the view that sustaining motivation requires the combined influence of learners' confidence, perceived relevance of task, and supportive learning environment. Although the earlier literature pointed to either expectancy and value or social support as individual predictors, this study reinforces the argument that all three factors must be present simultaneously to maintain motivation in online spaces. By emphasising social support abreast with expectancy and value, this study adds to the body of knowledge that online learning motivation is multifaceted and flourishes when learners' beliefs and interpersonal support structures are aligned.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

Theoretical and Conceptual Implications

From the findings of this study, several significant implications for the theoretical and conceptual frameworks supporting online learning motivation are offered. Grounded in Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) and current study confirms that expectancy, value and social support work in tandem to foster learner motivation in online settings. The results strengthen Vrooms's suggestion that motivation emerges when learners have the beliefs that they can perform the task (expectancy), trust that their efforts will lead to meaningful outcomes (instrumentality), and value those outcomes (valence). This is in accordance with the patterns observed in the present study that suggests strong learning beliefs and high task value corresponded with higher levels of social support.

Furthermore, the study also advocates the Community of Inquiry (CoI) model by Garrison et al. (2000), which highlights the importance of social presence and teaching presence in shaping and forming meaningful online learning experiences. The significant impact of instructor support and peer engagement discovered in this study resonates CoI's argument that social support is important for nurturing sustained engagement and reducing feelings of isolation. The integration of Vroom's motivation components with Fowler's (2018) constructs of

self-efficacy, task value, and instructor support, which were used to construct the conceptual framework, is validated through the strong associations among all three components.

All in all, the study offers theoretical confirmation that motivation in online learning is also social, and not just solely cognitive, displaying the necessity of integrating both motivation theory and social presence theory when defining learner engagement in digital environments.

Pedagogical Implications

A number of pedagogical implications arise, based on the findings of the study, in order to improve online teaching and learning practices. First of all, educators should underscore clear communication, timely feedback, and supportive facilitation in online courses because learners demonstrated greater engagement to instructor support and guidance. Weekly chick-ins, announcement updates, and prompt responses to student inquiries, which, all of them, are considered as regular interaction, as emphasised by the CoI model, can strengthen the teaching presence crucial to online engagement.

Second, the results on expectancy suggest that educators consider activities that build learners' confidence and self-efficacy in designing classroom activities such as formative practice tasks, guided assignments, and transparent evaluation criteria. Learners' motivation persistently increases when they feel capable of understanding course content.

Third, the relevance and usefulness of course materials, connecting activities to the real-world applications, future jobs, or authentic problem-solving contexts should remain the emphasis of educators since learners displayed high levels of task value. This strengthens valence and supports maintaining learner motivation.

Lastly, the role of social engagement suggests that online learning classes should deliberately include collaborative tasks, peer discussion opportunities, and team-based problem solving. These will improve social presence and lower the sense of isolation normally reported in online environments.

Suggestions for Future Research

Several extensions of the current study may be useful for future researchers to consider. First of all, future studies might want to consider larger and more diverse samples across private and public universities to enhance generalisability, since the current study only examined two local public universities.

Second, researchers may study how varieties of social support exclusively contribute to online learning motivation. The current study focused primarily on peer engagement and instructor support, but by studying a different dimension, it may offer a deeper and better insight.

Third, different research methodologies should be adopted by future researchers such as qualitative or mixed-method approaches, to capture multifaceted narratives underlying learners' motivation, including interviews that explain why certain elements of value, expectancy and social support matter more in other settings.

Lastly, researchers could explore trends across time in motivation across semesters or during transitions between hybrid, blended, and fully online formats. This will open for more understanding of how motivation evolves as learners develop proficiency with online learning.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to explore how online learning motivation is influenced by social support through the interconnected roles of expectancy, value and social support. The results signify that learners' ability to succeed, recognise the value and meaningfulness of their online learning materials, and benefit from instructor support and peer engagement, are positively perceived by learners. The result that proved the strong connection among three motivational variables reinforce that online learning motivation is driven by a combination of cognitive beliefs and social interactions. These findings supported the relevance of Vroom's Expectancy Theory, showing

that when learners believe that their works will result is success and when they value the outcomes associated with learning, their level of motivation is strengthened. Concurrently, the results also advocate the Community of Inquiry Model, focusing on the importance of instructor guidance and social presence in fostering participation and mitigating feelings of isolation in digital learning environments.

Furthermore, the significant differences in motivation across universities or academic clusters were not found in this study. This suggests that motivational patterns hold consistently across different educational contexts. This consistency demonstrates the foundational core of promoting online learning environments regardless of other elements such as location, seniority and also field of study. All in all, the findings play an important part to a deeper understanding of how learners stay motivated in online environments, emphasising the necessity for educational institutions to venture in clear instructional communication, timely feedback, chances for meaningful peer interaction. Educators can build a more effective and inclusive online learning experience by acknowledging the combined influence of expectancy, value and social support as it can promote sustained engagement and academic success.

REFERENCES

1. Ahmad, N., Alias, F.A., Hamat, M., & Mohamed, S.A. (2024) Reliability Analysis: Application of Cronbach's Alpha in Research Instruments. SIG: e-Learning@CS, 114-119. https://appspenang.uitm.edu.my/sigcs/
2. Amir, N., Sukimin, I. S., Radzi, S. F. M., Zolkapli, R. B. M., Soopar, A. A., & Rahmat, N. H. (2023). A Study of Relationship between Instrumentality, Expectancy and Value for Learning Motivation among Undergraduates. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 13(9), 1215–1233.
3. Fowler,S. (2018) The Motivation to learn Online Questionnaire. Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation. Graduate Faculty, The University of Georgia. Retrieved from https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/fowler_kevin_s_201805_phd.pdf
4. Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education model. The Internet and Higher Education, 2(2–3), 87–105. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1096-7516(00)00016-6
5. He, L. (2024) The Application of SPSS Correlation Analysis in the Study if Precision Teaching of English in Universities. Applied Mathematics and Nonlinear Science, 9(1), 1-13. http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/amns-2024-1371
6. Lokman, A., Hassan, F., Ustadi, Y. A., Rahman, F. A. A., Zain, Z. M., & Rahmat, N. H. (2022). Investigating motivation for learning via Vroom's theory. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 12(1), 504–530. https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i1/11749
7. Mok, S. S., Tan, S. L., Tai, Y. J., Chen, Z., & Rahmat, N. H. (2025). Motivation to learn online: An overview of students' perceptions. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 9(22), 361–375. https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.922ILEIID0036
8. Rahmat, N.H. (2025) Students' preference for Types of Online Engagement. International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counselling (IJEPC), 10(58) , 665—678 https://doi.org/10.35631/IJEPC.1058044
9. Vetter, T.R. (2017) Descriptive Statistics: Reporting the Answers to the 5 Basic Questions of Who, What, Why, When , Where, and a Sixth, so What? Anesth Analg, 12595), 1797-1802. https://doi.org/10.1213/ane.0000000000002471
10. Vo, H., & Ho, H. (2024). Online learning environment and student engagement: The mediating role of expectancy and task value beliefs. Australian Educational Researcher, 51, 2183–2207. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-024-00689-1
11. Vroom, V. (1964) Work and Motivation. Wiley and Sons, New York.
12. Zahid, A. Z. M., Kamaruddin, S. F., Saifullizam, N. Z., Noh, N., Ismail, H. B., & Kassim, J. (2024). The influence of value, social support and expectancy in online learning. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 14(7), 918–937. http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i7/21940

13. Ziegenfuss, J. Y., Casey A. E., Jennifer M. D., Meghan M. J., Thomas E. K, and Marna, C.. (202) Impact of Demographic Survey Questions on Response Rate and Measurement: A Randomized Experiment. Survey Practice 14 (1), https://doi.org/10.29115/SP-2021-0010.