

Teachers' Strategies to Increasing Elementary School Students' Learning Motivation: A Qualitative Study

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Keywords

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Abstract

Because it has a direct impact on academic achievement and character development of students, low student motivation to learn in elementary school is a big problem for the education system. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to find out teachers' opinions on the development of strategies that can increase students' desire to learn in elementary school. This research investigated students' motivation to learn, the approach used by teachers, this qualitative study involved an in-depth interview with a homeroom teacher and applying thematic analysis, and the challenges faced when applying the approach. A teacher at SDN Grinting was thoroughly interviewed for this study, which used a qualitative approach. The results show that a varied learning approach, a pleasant classroom atmosphere, persuasive communication, and parental involvement are important components in encouraging students' motivation to learn. In addition, the teacher's understanding of the characteristics of the students is essential in creating an effective learning strategy. This study found that the role of teachers as advocates, motivators, and communicators is essential to create an engaging and sustainable learning environment.

1. Introduction

Education is a long-term investment that is very important for a human being. Elementary school as an early level of education, has a crucial role in shaping the basics of students' personality and intelligence. In this context, learning motivation is an aspect needed to determine the success of the learning process. Low student motivation to learn is often seen from a lack of involvement during learning, as well as a high attendance rate, which directly impacts academic achievement (Anggraini & Sukartono, 2022). Low motivation to learn not only has an impact on academic achievement, but also hinders the development of students' creative potential and critical thinking. Therefore, efforts to increase learning motivation through innovative learning strategies are very important, where the role of teachers as agents of change has a significant contribution.

Low motivation to learn is often caused by a number of factors, both internal and external. Internal factors themselves include students' psychological conditions such as lack of confidence, low interest in learning, and negative perceptions of subject matter. Meanwhile, external factors include the condition of the classroom environment, teaching methods that are too monotonous, and the lack of support from the elderly and the surrounding environment. In practice, teachers must be able to identify and overcome various factors that affect low learning motivation to create a conducive learning atmosphere. According to (Sakinah, 2023), the role of teachers as motivators is very important because it not only delivers material, but also inspires and arouses students' enthusiasm for learning through innovative and communicative approaches.

From a scientific point of view, many studies have shown that internal student factors are not the only ones that contribute to increased student learning motivation. The interaction between teachers and students, as well as the teaching strategies used, also contribute. (Handiyani and Muhtar, 2022) stated that using a differentiated learning approach, tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of each student, has been proven to be effective in increasing students' motivation and interest in learning. This method allows educators to create learning that is less monotonous and more responsive to different learning styles. This ensures that every student has an optimal learning experience. In addition, research by (Jainiyah et al., 2023) emphasizes that teachers have a central role in changing the classroom atmosphere through the dual role of educators and facilitators who

are able to build good interpersonal communication, create a supportive environment, and provide constructive feedback.

Because of this situation, it is important for teachers to have a deep understanding of creative methods that can increase their students' desire to learn. The teacher's perspective not only conveys hands-on experience in the field, they also provide an overview of successful problems and solutions. It is hoped that teachers can create an inspiring learning atmosphere by utilizing interactive media, collaborative work, and supportive evaluation methods. By using a phenomenological approach, qualitative research can reveal teachers' experiences and perceptions as a whole. This allows for a broad understanding of the dynamics that drive learning in elementary school.

This research aims to study teachers' perspectives on how they make plans to improve students' learning motivation in primary schools. Specifically, the study focuses on: identifying internal (such as a student's psychological condition and his or her learning interests) and external (such as the classroom environment and family support) that influence students' desire to learn, looking at the creative learning methods used by teachers to encourage students to learn. This includes the use of good learning media, differentiation, and interpersonal interaction and evaluating the barriers teachers face when implementing strategies to increase student motivation, as well as the solutions that have been used to overcome those barriers.

Literature reviews have found that increasing student learning motivation is the result of the synergy between students' internal efforts and the active role of teachers as facilitators and motivators. For example, differentiated learning strategies not only help accommodate differences in learning styles, but also encourage students to be more active and creative in the learning process (Handiyani & Muhtar, 2022). On the other hand, the role of teachers as mediators and evaluators is crucial in creating feedback that builds and motivates students to reach their maximum potential (Jainiyah et al., 2023). However, few studies have specifically examined the internal strategies and perceptions of teachers in primary schools in rural or low-resource areas, therefore, this research is expected to not only enrich the scientific treasures regarding learning motivation, but also provide practical guidance for educators in designing and implementing effective learning strategies.

This research aims to uncover the realities and dynamics that occur in the classroom through the collection of teachers' experiences, perceptions, and expectations about students' learning motivations. This research is expected to make a positive contribution to the development of more creative and flexible learning strategies, so that the quality of education in elementary schools can continue to be improved and produce a proficient and competitive generation.

2. Method

In this study, a qualitative approach was used with the aim of exploring how a teacher develops a plan to increase students' learning motivation at the elementary school level. The interview was conducted with a teacher at SDN Grinting, namely Mrs. Dwi Ratna Andarwati, who was selected purposively based on her experience and involvement in the development of learning strategies.

The data collection procedure is carried out through in-depth interviews which are semi-structured to allow for flexible but still directed exploration of information. Interview questions cover various dimensions, such as factors that affect students' motivation to learn, characteristics of students with high and low levels of motivation, and pedagogical strategies that teachers apply to arouse interest in learning. The data was analyzed thematically using open coding and categorized into emerging themes. Triangulation was applied through reflection on the teacher's journal and observation notes

3. Results and Discussion

Results

The following table presents the results of the research that summarizes the various strategies used by teachers at SDN Grinting to design strategies to increase students' motivation to learn.

Table 1. Table Title

No	Aspects	Description
1	Identify students' learning motivation	The motivation of students to learn in elementary school is influenced by many things. One of them is the family environment, especially how parents support children's learning activities at home. In addition, during learning, teachers create a fun classroom atmosphere, engage with students, and have peers have a role in motivating student learning. Students who have high learning motivation tend to actively ask questions, are enthusiastic during learning, quickly complete assignments, and look happy while learning. They also like to find out more than the teacher explains. Meanwhile, students who are low in motivation tend to be passive, often avoid assignments, get bored easily, and are lazy to come to school.
2	Strategy	The strategy used in increasing students' motivation to learn is to use varied and fun learning methods, such as educational games, group projects, or stories that are relevant to the material. Teachers also like to give small praise or rewards for students' efforts, not just the results. In addition, teachers invite students to reflect, why they should learn something and how it benefits in daily life
3	Obstacles or challenges	The biggest challenges usually come from students who lack support at home. Sometimes students come to school unprepared to learn, both emotionally and physically. In addition, differences in students' abilities and interests can also be a challenge in itself.

Each student has a unique character, as well as in the learning process. Each student has a different speed of thinking, there are students who are enthusiastic or quickly bored in the learning process. There are also students who like to be given challenges and vice versa, some like to compete and some are ordinary. All of these types of characters must be recognized by every teacher first, then teachers are able to build effective persuasive communication in increasing student learning motivation. Teachers believe that students' character is able to influence their learning motivation, this is called the student's internal factor while the external factor is the family environment and the school environment. In building an environment that supports students' motivation to learn, teachers do not act alone.

Discussion

The results of interviews and thematic analysis of teachers' practices in increasing student learning motivation show that there are key strategies that consistently have a positive influence on the positive influence on student participation and enthusiasm. These strategies not only focus on the temporary academic dimension, but also include the affective and social aspects of students, thus reflecting a holistic and humanistic approach.

Teachers apply varied learning, which combines various instructional methods such as educational games, group discussions, creative presentations, and the use of interactive visual media. The goal is to create learning that is dynamic, fun, and able to avoid student boredom in participating in learning activities. Teachers also strive to adjust the strategy to the characteristics of students, so as to encourage active student participation and focus on student learning. Multisensory and engaging learning can increase material retention and build positive relationships between students and subject matter.

Persuasive communication is deused by teachers as an interpersonal approach that fosters emotional closeness. Teachers also play the role of communicators who not only convey information, but also build psychological relationships with students. In practice, teachers listen to students' complaints, provide personal enthusiasm, and create a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere. This approach refers to the theory of attitude change and persuasion put forward by (Carl Hovland, 1953), which states that the effectiveness of persuasive communication depends on the credibility of the communicator, the quality of the message and the emotional impression of the audience. In the context of education, teachers are a source of moral and academic authority, so that the communication conveyed is able to shape students' attitudes and behaviors. Teachers also use a personal approach, such as having light discussions with students who have learning difficulties or low learning motivation, and help them understand the meaning of learning according to their own perspective.

Teachers also try to involve parents in the learning process, by inviting them to class programs, establishing regular communication and collaboration in monitoring students' academic

development. Parental involvement creates synergy between the two main environments of students, namely home and school, which in turn increases the continuity of the learning process, discipline and a sense of responsibility of students. The support provided by parents is also an important foundation in building students' confidence and emotional stability.

Teachers strengthen students' character through strategies of giving appreciation, classroom training and responsibility, as well as instilling positive values. The form of rewards given is not only material, but also symbolic such as praise, applause, numbering, or other symbols of student achievement. This strategy is relevant to Uno's view that awards are the easiest and most effective way to increase learning motivation (Lestari, 2020). Students who feel valued and trusted will show increased confidence, responsibility, and stronger intrinsic motivation. Students feel compelled to be better because they feel they have an important role in the classroom.

Creating a comfortable and friendly atmosphere can make students feel appreciated and can increase student participation during learning. Creating a comfortable learning atmosphere also includes the way educators deliver material, the use of interesting learning methods, the use of varied learning media, the organization of learning activities that are not only individual but also in groups so that students can also get to know and interact with their peers so that students feel recognized by their peers. Creating a friendly learning atmosphere is in line with previous research conducted by (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011) which states that creating a friendly and comfortable climate for each student is one of the factors that encourage the creation of significant learning motivation.

Every effort made by teachers in designing learning methods that is not based on understanding characteristics does not produce meaning for students. As the teacher said in the interview "I always try to make the class feel fun, because if they are happy, they are enthusiastic about learning". This study emphasizes that the emotional aspect is an important foundation in generating students' motivation to learn. Students who pay attention to each explanation of the teacher will immediately practice and convey to their parents that they will apply the values taught by the teacher in their daily lives. Parents also support the efforts made by teachers at school, thereby helping to educate students in accordance with the teachings given at school. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors come from the family condition and the confidence of the students themselves. The success of the student learning process is certainly not only the responsibility of the school and teachers, but the role of parents is very important in building students' trust in themselves and the surrounding environment.

Overall, these findings confirm that the role of teachers as motivational facilitators lies not only in the learning methods used, but also in emotional approaches, empathetic communication, and synergy with parents. These strategies are in line with a humanistic approach in education that places students' psychological needs as the foundation of academic success..

3.1 Conclusion

According to this study, there are a number of internal and external factors that affect students' desire to learn in elementary school. These factors include the psychological condition of students, the family environment, and the teaching approach used by teachers. From the teacher's perspective, strategies such as the use of varied and fun learning methods, rewarding, and the creation of a comfortable and communicative classroom environment have proven effective in increasing students' motivation to learn. Teachers not only play the role of teachers, but also facilitators, motivators, and communicators who are able to foster students' confidence and interest in learning through a persuasive communication approach and understanding of the characteristics of each student. Close collaboration between teachers and parents is also an important factor in creating a positive and sustainable learning environment.

Therefore, it can be concluded that efforts to increase students' motivation to learn require a humanistic, participatory, and flexible approach, which is tailored to the needs and backgrounds of students. These findings are in line with the purpose of the study, which is to find out how a teacher designs strategies in increasing students' desire to learn. Thus, the strategies applied by teachers, as expressed in the interview, can be used as a reference in the development of more effective and enjoyable learning practices at the elementary school level. Schools should support regular teacher reflection sessions and family engagement programs to institute motivation-based strategies. The

data was analyzed thematically using open coding and categorized into emerging themes. Triangulation was applied through reflection on the teacher's journal and observation notes.

Author Contributions

To promote transparency, we encourage authors to provide an author statement file detailing their specific contributions to the paper using the relevant CRediT roles: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Supervision; Validation; Visualization; Roles/Writing - original draft; Writing - review & editing. Authorship statements should list authors' names first, followed by their respective CRediT role(s). For example: Nur Hudha: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software. John Smith: Data curation, Writing - Original draft preparation. Jane White: Visualization, Investigation. Bruce Buck: Supervision. Matt Jr.: Software, Validation. Peter Long: Writing - Reviewing and Editing.

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