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Literature Review: Direct (Concrete) Experience-Based Learning Strategies and Emotional Support and Motivation for Visually Impaired Children

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Abstract

This literature review aims to analyze the effectiveness of learning strategies based on *experiential learning* and emotional and motivational support in enhancing the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in inclusive schools. This study employs a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) approach by examining ten academic articles published between 2022 and 2025 that focus on the education of children with special needs. The analysis revealed that visual impairments cause visually impaired children to face barriers in understanding abstract concepts presented visually, so they require concrete experiences to fully grasp the learning material. Experiential learning strategies have proven effective because they enable children to learn through tactile, auditory, and kinesthetic activities that stimulate cognitive processes and enhance active engagement. Furthermore, emotional support from teachers—in the form of empathy, psychological support, and positive reinforcement—plays a crucial role in building students' self-confidence and intrinsic motivation. The synergy between concrete experiences and emotional support results in more meaningful and humanistic learning that focuses not only on academic outcomes but also on the psychological well-being of visually impaired children. This study underscores the importance of the teacher's role as a facilitator who understands students' emotional needs and individual learning characteristics. Further research is recommended to test the effectiveness of these strategies through an empirical approach in inclusive schools to obtain practical data that supports the development of adaptive learning models for students with visual impairments.

Keywords: Visually impaired children, direct experience-based learning, emotional support.

1. Introduction

Education is a fundamental right possessed by every individual without exception, including children with special needs. Based on the 1945 Constitution and Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, it is stipulated that every citizen has the right to receive a proper education without discrimination. In reality, this right has not yet been fully realized for some children with special needs, particularly for visually impaired children. According to 2017 data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the number of children with special needs in Indonesia reached 1.6 million, and only about 18% received adequate inclusive education services (Pratama et al., 2023). This situation highlights a significant gap between regulations and their implementation on the ground.

In the case of visually impaired children, educational challenges become even more complex because visual impairments hinder the process of receiving information through sight. Children with visual impairments require different learning strategies than typical

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children, as their learning experiences rely more heavily on the sense of touch, hearing, and the power of imagination. According to Wardhani (2025), educational services for visually impaired children should not only emphasize academic aspects but must also address psychological and social-emotional aspects to enable them to adapt to their environment and develop independence. Inclusive education represents the government's concrete effort to address these challenges; however, there remain shortcomings in the implementation of effective methods tailored to the individual needs of visually impaired children.

According to (Alpian et al., 2019), education is the cornerstone of character development and human intelligence, involving a balanced integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. For visually impaired children, effective learning focuses not only on the transfer of knowledge but also on strengthening emotional well-being and motivation. This is important because children with visual impairments often face obstacles in developing self-confidence, empathy, and the motivation to excel. Experiential learning is believed to help them understand abstract concepts through concrete experiences, such as through touch, sound, and hands-on activities that involve students' active participation.

According to (Febriyanti, 2021), the educational concept developed by Ki Hajar Dewantara— —with its motto "Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo, Ing Madyo Mangun Karso, Tut Wuri Handayani"—emphasizes the importance of the educator's role in fostering motivation and inner drive within students. This concept is highly relevant for visually impaired children, as the teacher's role extends beyond that of a mere knowledge transmitter to include that of an emotional guide capable of creating a learning environment filled with empathy and psychological support. When children's emotional well-being is strengthened, their learning abilities improve significantly due to a sense of being valued and recognized.

However, previous research has largely emphasized conventional, auditory-based learning approaches without fully integrating emotional and motivational elements. Most studies still focus on the use of visual assistive devices such as Braille displays or screen-reading technology, while students' psychological dimensions are rarely considered primary variables in instructional design. This gap highlights the need for a more holistic approach—that is, learning strategies that combine concrete experiences with emotional and motivational reinforcement as a unified whole. Such strategies are expected to stimulate cognitive development while simultaneously building self-confidence and independence in visually impaired children during the learning process.

Furthermore, Heward (as cited in Roniyati & Pertiwi, 2020) explains that children with special needs have distinct characteristics that do not necessarily indicate mental, emotional, or physical disabilities. This means that visually impaired children still possess great potential for development if provided with learning methods tailored to their specific characteristics. Concrete experience-based learning can serve as a solution to bridge their visual limitations by providing real and meaningful learning opportunities. In this context, the teacher's role as an empathetic and communicative facilitator is essential to ensure the learning process is both effective and enjoyable.

Observations in inclusive schools indicate that visually impaired children often struggle to understand abstract subject matter, particularly in subjects that rely heavily on visual comprehension, such as science or mathematics. This situation causes them to easily feel left behind and lose their motivation to learn. Concrete experience-based learning strategies are

crucial because they help students build mental representations through hands-on activities such as exploring real objects, using tactile materials, or simulating real-life situations relevant to the subject matter (Wardhani, 2025). Through these real-world experiences, the learning process becomes more contextual and easier for students to retain.

In addition to cognitive aspects, emotional factors also play a crucial role in the learning success of visually impaired children. Without strong emotional support, children may experience psychological stress, leading to low self-confidence and reduced motivation to learn. Teachers who are able to provide emotional support through interpersonal approaches and positive reinforcement can help children feel accepted and valued. When children feel safe and supported, their enthusiasm for learning increases. This approach aligns with self-determination theory, which emphasizes the importance of the needs for autonomy, competence, and social connectedness in building students' intrinsic motivation.

Based on these phenomena and theoretical studies, the main research question can be formulated as follows: What challenges do visually impaired children face in the learning process related to their needs for concrete, emotional, and motivational experiences, and how can the implementation of learning strategies based on direct experience, emotional support, and motivation help improve the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in inclusive schools? The purpose of this literature review is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the forms of implementation and the effectiveness of learning strategies that integrate direct experiential, emotional, and motivational aspects in supporting the academic development and psychological well-being of visually impaired children. Through this approach, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of adaptive and humanistic learning models for students with visual impairments will be gained.

2. Methods

The method used in this study was *a Systematic Literature Review* (SLR). This approach aims to review, analyze, and synthesize relevant research findings related to direct-experience (*concrete*) learning strategies and the promotion of emotional well-being and motivation among visually impaired children. Through the SLR, the researcher can identify patterns, effectiveness, and practical applications of these learning strategies in inclusive educational settings.

2.1. Formulating Research Questions

This study focuses on two main questions, namely:

a. What challenges do visually impaired children face in the learning process related to their needs for concrete, emotional, and motivational experiences?
b. How can the implementation of learning strategies based on direct experience, along with emotional support and motivation, help improve the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in inclusive schools?

2.2. Literature Review

The literature search was conducted by reviewing relevant, indexed national and international journals such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, and Semantic Scholar. The keywords used included *"learning strategies for the blind*," *"experiential learning for visually impaired students*," *"emotional support in inclusive education*," *"motivational enhancement for blind students*," and *"inclusive learning for students with special needs."*

2.3. Selecting References

Selection was conducted by reading abstracts and reviewing the relevance of the article's content to the research focus. The selected articles addressed learning strategies, emotional approaches, and motivational enhancement for visually impaired children. Inclusion criteria included publications from 2022 to 2025, a focus on the education of children with special needs, and a discussion of concrete and emotional strategies.

No	Question	Source	Author, Year of Publication	Title of Publication
1	What challenges do visually impaired children face in the learning process related to their need for concrete, emotional, and motivational experiences?	*Quality: Journal of Community Service Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research*	Wardhani, Rr Dina Kusuma (2025) Dacholfany et al (2023)	Special Education Program for the Visually Impaired: A Needs-Based Learning Management Framework in Public Special Education Schools
		Socius: Journal of Social Science Research	Mauliddin et al. (2024)	The Effect of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Approach on Visually Impaired Children at the Kedungkandang State Special School (SLB ABD), Malang City
		JPGENUS: Journal of Nusantara Generation Education Nusantara	Dina & Harsiwi (2025)	Strategies for Supporting Visually Impaired and Deaf Children Through the Personal- , and Learning Environment Design Approaches
		JIWA: Journal of Academic Innovation	Junari et al. (2025)	Appropriate Learning Strategies for Children with Special Needs (ABK)

2	How can the implementation of learning strategies based on direct experience, emotional support, and motivation help improve the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in inclusive schools?	*Journal of Special Education*	Zulpikar et al. (2025)	Managing the Learning of Visually Impaired Children with Special Needs at the SMALB Level
		Intelek Insan Cendikia Journal	Rahmat et al. (2025)	Learning Management Strategies to Address Learning Challenges at State Special Education School (SLB) No. 2 Garut
		Developments in the Implementation of Inclusive Education	Ayuningtyas et al. (2023)	Getting to Know Visually Impaired Children Better: Characteristics, Impacts, Development, and Learning Methods
		SHES: Conference Series	Pratama et al. (2023)	Strategies for Teaching Islamic Education to Visually Impaired Children with Special Needs
		Indonesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences	Ningrum, Nila Ainu (2022)	Learning Strategies for Children with Special Needs in Special Education

2.4. Data Extraction

Each article was analyzed using a data extraction form that documented the research focus, methods, key findings, and implications for the learning of visually impaired children. Key areas of focus included the effectiveness of concrete strategies (hands-on experiences), the teacher's role in providing emotional support, and factors that enhance learning motivation.

2.5. Analyzing and Presenting Results

After the articles were inventoried, the data were analyzed using a thematic approach to group the research findings into two main categories: learning challenges and the application of learning strategies. The results were synthesized with an emphasis on

patterns of effective interventions and their contextual relevance to the inclusive education of visually impaired children.

2.6. Interpreting the Results

The researcher interpreted the findings to address the research questions and linked each result to the theories *of experiential learning* and *emotional-motivational reinforcement*. The interpretation was presented narratively to illustrate how concrete learning strategies and emotional reinforcement can enhance the participation, understanding, and motivation of visually impaired children in the learning process.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

Based on a review of ten journal articles, the following findings emerged from each study:

Wardhani (2025) — Learning strategies based on direct experience, as well as emotional support and motivation, play a crucial role in enhancing the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in inclusive schools. Learning programs should emphasize a balance between academic and emotional needs, with teachers serving as sources of moral and psychological support for students.

Dacholfany et al. (2023) — Needs-based learning management is the cornerstone of education for visually impaired children, encompassing the identification of learning needs, the development of a Personalized Education Program (PEP), and interventions tailored to students' learning barriers. Concrete experience strategies are implemented through hands-on activities that engage the senses of touch and hearing.

Ayuningtyas et al. (2023) — Visually impaired children have unique characteristics in receiving and processing information, relying more on their senses of hearing and touch. A hands-on approach helps students create mental representations of abstract concepts through tactile exploration and multisensory activities.

Dina & Harsiwi (2025) — A personalized approach between teachers and students plays a major role in building positive emotional bonds. An adaptive learning environment (accessibility-friendly classroom layout, multisensory media) contributes to students' sense of safety and comfort, reduces psychological stress, and enhances active participation.

Pratama et al. (2023) — Effective inclusive education for visually impaired children depends not only on physical facilities or assistive devices (e.g., Braille displays), but also on teachers' ability to manage strategies that integrate cognitive, emotional, and social aspects—for example, through narrative methods, role-playing, or simulations in Islamic Education (PAI) instruction.

Zulpikar et al. (2025) — It is important to conduct evaluations in stages tailored to students' individual abilities. Process-based assessment is recommended over outcome-based assessment alone because it better reflects students' conceptual understanding and social-emotional development.

Mauliddin et al. (2024) — The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach, which connects course material to real life, has been shown to enhance the motivation and understanding of visually impaired children through exploration of their surroundings.

Rahmat et al. (2025) — Learning strategies for students with special needs require a holistic approach that encompasses physical, sensory, intellectual, and social-emotional aspects, utilizing a differentiated instruction model along with parental involvement and collaboration among stakeholders.

Ningrum (2022) — Learning strategies should be directed toward creating an inclusive and non-discriminatory learning environment, supported by a school culture that embraces diversity and fosters empathy among all members of the school community.

Junari et al. (2025) — Multisensory-based learning strategies (auditory, tactile, kinesthetic) are effective in helping students understand information comprehensively, fostering social-emotional skills, and are enhanced by the use of assistive technologies such as screen readers and tactile communication aids.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the results of a review of the ten analyzed journals, it was found that learning strategies based on direct experience, as well as emotional support and motivation, play a crucial role in enhancing the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in an inclusive school environment. These strategies have proven effective in addressing the concrete and psychological needs of students with visual impairments by providing them with opportunities to learn actively through meaningful experiences and to receive continuous emotional support from teachers and their surroundings (Wardhani, 2025).

Findings from a study (Dacholfany et al., 2023) indicate that needs-based learning management is the cornerstone of education for visually impaired children. The process of identifying learning needs, developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP), and implementing interventions tailored to students' learning barriers serves as the first step in creating relevant learning experiences. In this context, learning strategies based on concrete experiences are implemented through hands-on activities that engage the sense of touch and hearing to reinforce conceptual understanding.

Furthermore, the findings of a study (Ayuningtyas et al., 2023) reinforce these conclusions by emphasizing that visually impaired children possess unique characteristics in how they receive and process information. They rely more heavily on senses other than sight—such as hearing and touch—to understand instructional material. In this regard, the hands-on approach is an effective method because it helps students create mental representations of abstract concepts through tactile exploration and multisensory activities.

This type of approach not only enhances cognitive retention but also provides an enjoyable learning experience and stimulates students' curiosity.

Emotional and motivational support strategies are also key aspects identified in several studies. According to Dina & Harsiwi (2025), a personal connection between teachers and students plays a major role in building positive emotional bonds. Teachers who

understand the psychological needs of visually impaired children can provide moral support and boost motivation through appreciation and empathy. The implementation of an adaptive learning environment—such as an accessibility-friendly classroom layout and the use of multisensory media—contributes to students' sense of safety and comfort while learning. This approach helps reduce psychological stress and increases children's active participation in learning activities.

Another study by Pratama et al. (2023) found that effective inclusive education for visually impaired children depends not only on physical facilities or assistive devices such as or Braille displays, but more on how teachers manage learning strategies that integrate cognitive, emotional, and social aspects. Teachers are expected to be creative in delivering religious education (PAI) content—for example, through narrative methods, role-playing, or simulations of daily life that teach moral values in a concrete way. Such strategies enable visually impaired children to internalize the values of the lessons through real-life experiences, rather than merely through theoretical memorization.

A study (Zulpikar et al., 2025) highlights the importance of the evaluation phase in the education of visually impaired children. In this process, assessments are tailored to students' individual abilities and take into account their development throughout the learning process. Process-based assessment is recommended over outcome-based assessment alone, as it better reflects the extent to which students understand concepts and develop social-emotional skills. This type of evaluation also encourages teachers to continuously refine their teaching strategies based on students' real-world responses.

The results of a study (Mauliddin et al., 2024) on the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach show that contextual methods that connect curriculum content to real life enhance the motivation and understanding of visually impaired children. CTL strategies enable students to learn in a more practical way through exploration of their surroundings and everyday life experiences. This reflects the core principle of direct-experience-based learning: providing children with opportunities to engage in such experiences. This emotionally-based reinforcement strategy plays a significant role in fostering students' intrinsic motivation, which ultimately enhances the effectiveness of the learning process. The integration of concrete experiences and emotional reinforcement results in learning that focuses not only on academic outcomes but also on character development, independence, and the psychological well-being of visually impaired children. A meta-analysis of various studies indicates that when students are given the space to experience, feel, and make sense of the learning process through a humanistic approach, improvements in cognitive, affective, and social aspects can occur simultaneously (Dacholfany et al., 2023). The implementation of this strategy also reflects a paradigm shift in inclusive education from a medical approach to a social approach that emphasizes the potential—rather than the limitations—of each individual.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the literature review conducted, it can be concluded that learning strategies based on direct experience, combined with emotional support and motivation, play a significant role in enhancing the learning effectiveness of visually impaired children in inclusive schools. Learning based on concrete experiences helps visually impaired children understand abstract concepts through tactile exploration, auditory input, and

multisensory activities that involve active participation. Through this strategy, the learning process is not only oriented toward academic outcomes but also fosters children's reflective thinking, curiosity, and social skills. Furthermore, emotional support from teachers through empathy, appreciation, and interpersonal support creates a psychologically safe learning environment, which in turn strengthens students' intrinsic motivation to continue actively participating in learning. The integration of concrete experiences and emotional support is key to creating a humanistic educational model for visually impaired children. This approach aligns with the educational values of Ki Hajar Dewantara, which emphasize a balance between teaching, guidance, and moral encouragement. This strategy also reflects a paradigm shift in inclusive education that views children with special needs as active participants with the potential to develop, rather than as individuals limited by physical disabilities. When education is designed based on students' emotional needs and direct experiences, learning outcomes become more meaningful and sustainable. A recommendation for future research is to conduct an experimental study that empirically tests the effectiveness of a learning model based on direct experience and emotional reinforcement through direct observation in inclusive schools, in order to obtain more measurable and practical data.

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