The Phenomenon of Learning Motivation of Elementary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Learning motivation is one of the important things that can affect the student’s learning process. This study aims to explore the phenomenon of learning motivation of elementary school students. This research is quantitative research using survey exploratory research. Subjects involved in this study amounted to 51 elementary school students. Data collection uses a questionnaire as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was compiled based on four components of learning motivation, namely the drive for achievement, discipline in learning, readiness to overcome difficulties, and curiosity. The questionnaire uses a Likert scale with the categories “always”, “often”, “sometimes”, and “never”. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results showed that in general, the students had high motivation. However, this high motivation is not in line with concrete actions that show their enthusiasm for learning. This is because the motivation that develops is extrinsic. Students learn to get rewarded or to avoid punishment from teachers. Nevertheless, the students are aware of their obligations as students and believe in their abilities. This can be used as initial capital to encourage students to improve their learning achievement.

1. INTRODUCTION

In facing dynamic social demands, elementary school students need to be equipped with basic skills, which include social and intellectual intelligence, financial literacy, digital literacy, and so on (Budiman, 2017; Bujuri, 2018; Labudasari & Rochmah, 2019). Elementary schools as formal educational institutions are the best places to learn all these basic skills (Batubara & Ariani, 2016; Kasanah et al., 2019; Prihandoko et al., 2017). Elementary school students are expected to take advantage of their learning opportunities at school to explore every potential they have (Adnyana et al., 2019; Agustini, 2020; Hidayah, 2014). However, the basic thing that is needed to make this happen is whether or not students are willing to learn (Sari, 2014; Sulfemi & Mayasari, 2019). Students’ willingness to learn is known as learning motivation (Saputri, 2019; Savira et al., 2018). If we look at the theories of motivation today, the pressure point has undergone a paradigmatic shift. The traditional concept at the beginning of the 20th century which came from scientific management theory, where money was the main motivation for a person to live in a society (Veithzal & Sylviana, 2010), is currently the basis and orientation of motivation is different. At present, motivation theory is dominated by social cognitive theorists with an emphasis on aspects of ability, self-efficacy, hope for success, and belief in intelligence. In other words, the sociological-ecological dimension of motivation has received more attention than the approach to individual needs – represented by Abraham Maslow with his overly optimistic concept of humanistic

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psychology and glorifying self-admiration – which has almost disappeared from the literature (Kathryn, 2009; Stefanie, 2006).

Motivation is a group of processes that cause encouragement, direction, and persistence of one's behavior (Novia et al., 2016; Saraghil et al., 2019). Motivation is a process that leads to a tendency to act to produce one or more influences (Dale, 2002; Sukma, 2017). Motivation has intensity and direction. Motivation is like the engine (intensity) and steering (direction) of a car (Sutardi & Sugiharsono, 2016; Wuryani, 2009). Several other experts such as Vroom, Ryan, Hellriegel, Slocum, and Lawler added a "voluntary" component or emphasis on "goal" to the above definition. Here, motivation means a psychological process that causes encouragement, direction, and persistence from voluntary actions that lead to goals (Dale, 2002; Suryansah & Suwarjo, 2016). From this description, it can be said that motivation is a psychological process within the individual. which is influenced by internal and external factors, and directs the individual's behavior to the goal to be achieved. This perspective leads to understanding the most dynamic and interesting theme in the world of education, namely learning motivation. The student himself is a learner who is currently learning, manage their ability to move towards self-actualization with the knowledge they have (Dewi, 2017; Nadia & Fardana, 2018). Motivation is the energy, source of enthusiasm, and controller of learning activities. In many cases in the field, a teacher usually knows to distinguish students who have the motivation to learn and those who do not (Sudibjo & Nasution, 2020; Wildan et al., 2019). The experience of interacting directly between teachers and students forms in him an intuitive sensitivity (Bashori, 2017; Darso, 2017). To find out students who have learning motivation can be seen from several symptoms, namely the strong will of students to learn and achieve, learning discipline, willingness to leave other obligations or tasks, and perseverance in doing assignments (Suprihatin, 2015). A student's motivation can be seen if the student is diligent in doing assignments, tenacious in the face of difficulties (not quickly discouraged), shows interest in various adult problems, prefers to work independently, gets bored quickly on routine tasks, and can defend his opinion (Sardiman, 2012).

Motivation in students must be formed from within themselves, although external intervention is necessary (Rahayu & Thomas, 2017; Yudiyanto et al., 2020). Behaviorists emphasize external motivation in achieving learning goals while cognitivist and humanists emphasize intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation means that students have a strong drive for achievement, high curiosity, discipline, and can overcome learning difficulties. For students to learn well, they need to be motivated from the outside in the form of scoring their assignments, giving prizes, creating competitions, growing awareness of learning, giving tests, checking learning outcomes, praise, punishment, encouraging their desire and interest in learning, and formulating recognized learning goals. Such forms of motivation are important to achieve learning goals (Sardiman, 2012). The fact shows that learning activities that are driven by intrinsic motivation are more successful than those driven by extrinsic motivation (Sumadi, 1995), although it is recognized that external motivation remains very important because students are motivated to learn when they are given a choice by the teacher, are happy to face appropriate difficulties, with their abilities, and receive rewards that contain transformational value but are not used to exercise control (Santrock, 2009).

Based on an initial study in several elementary schools throughout the Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT students' motivation to learn appears to be declining. Several students lack enthusiasm for achievement, lack curiosity, rarely ask questions in class, only expect teacher explanations, rarely discuss with friends unless asked to discuss. Quite a lot of people don't read books. They prefer to play rather than study the subject matter at effective hours. This shows that their learning motivation is relatively low. This study aims to explore the phenomenon of learning motivation of elementary school students.

2. METHOD

This research uses exploratory research. Exploratory research is one type of research whose purpose is to provide a definition or explanation of the concepts or patterns used in research (Agung, 2011; Sugiyono, 2014). This exploratory research aims to explore the phenomenon of learning motivation of elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT. This study uses a survey method, which is a research method that uses the same structured/systematic questions to many subjects, then all answers obtained by researchers are recorded, processed, and analyzed (Agung, 2011; Sugiyono, 2014). The population in this study were elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT. Determination of the sample was carried out using random sampling technique, so that a sample of 51 elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT was obtained as a representative of the
population. Data collection in this study used a non-test method with an instrument in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire in question is a learning motivation questionnaire which is based on four components of learning motivation, namely the drive for achievement, discipline in learning, readiness to face learning difficulties, and curiosity. The questionnaire uses a Likert scale with categories always, often, sometimes, and never. Before being used, the learning motivation instrument has gone through a process of testing validity and reliability. The data on perceptions of learning motivation that had been collected were then analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics used include calculating the average and percentage.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

In this study, the motivation of elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT was assessed based on four components, namely the drive for achievement; discipline in learning; readiness to overcome difficulties; and curiosity. Overall, data on the learning motivation of elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT is presented in Figure 1. In Figure 1, it can be seen that most of the students have a high level of learning motivation. This is quite contrary to the initial information obtained by the researcher. In the initial information obtained, it was stated that there was a phenomenon of a decrease in the learning motivation of elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT. This fact encourages researchers to review in detail the data related to the components of student learning motivation. Based on the data obtained, it turns out that the phenomenon of low learning motivation tends to occur in the component of curiosity (curiosity). This is presented in Figure 2.

![Figure 1. Students’ Learning Motivation](image1)

![Figure 2. Comparison of Student Motivation Components](image2)

Discussion

Motivation is a group of processes that cause encouragement, direction, and persistence of one’s behavior (Novia et al., 2016; Saragih et al., 2019). Motivation is a process that leads to a tendency to act to produce one or more influences (Dale, 2002; Sukma, 2017). Motivation has intensity and direction. Motivation is like the engine (intensity) and steering (direction) of a car (Sutardi & Sugiharsono, 2016; Wuryani, 2009). Several other experts such as Vroom, Ryan, Hellriegel, Slocum, and Lawler added a “voluntary” component or emphasis on “goal” to the above definition. Here, motivation means a psychological process that causes encouragement, direction, and persistence from voluntary actions that lead to goals (Dale, 2002; Suryansah & Suwarjo, 2016). From this description, it can be said that motivation is a psychological process within the individual which is influenced by internal and external factors, and directs the individual’s behavior to the goal to be achieved. This perspective leads to understanding the most dynamic and interesting theme in the world of education, namely learning motivation. The student himself is a learner who is currently learning, manage their ability to move towards self-actualization with the knowledge they have (Dewi, 2017; Nadia & Fardana, 2018). Motivation is the energy, source of enthusiasm, and controller of learning activities. In many cases in the field, a teacher usually knows to distinguish students who have the motivation to learn and those who do not (Sudibjo & Nasution, 2020; Wildan et al., 2019). The experience of interacting directly between teachers and students forms in him an intuitive sensitivity (Bashori, 2017; Darso, 2017). To find out students who have learning motivation can be seen from several symptoms, namely the strong will of students to learn and achieve, learning discipline, willingness to leave other obligations or tasks, and perseverance in doing assignments (Suprihatin, 2015). A student’s motivation can be seen if the student is diligent in doing...
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The low learning motivation that occurs in the curiosity component can be caused because curiosity requires someone to take real action, not just a commitment from the existence of learning motivation. Raharja, et al revealed that curiosity is an internal drive to get new information without appreciation or without extrinsic motivation (Raharja et al., 2018). In general, the students did have a high level of motivation. However, the fact related to their low curiosity shows that students’ learning motivation is limited to commitments that have not been realized in real action. This latent condition then gave rise to the phenomenon that most elementary school students in Kecamatan Lamba Leda Utara, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur, NTT rarely look for new ideas, rarely ask the teacher if they find problems related to certain materials, rarely look for reading to add insight, do not like to discuss with other people, and do homework, practice questions only when instructed by the teacher. In addition to curiosity, discipline in learning and readiness to overcome difficulties are also components of learning motivation that need attention. In the Likert scale, the average component of discipline in learning and readiness to overcome difficulties is below a score of 2.5. This fact shows that the two components of learning motivation are also low. The students do not have a study schedule, rarely complete assignments from the teacher according to the time and provisions and do not feel anxious if learning time is missed.

In contrast to the three components of learning motivation that have been described, the component of the drive for achievement gets the highest position. The students have high enthusiasm for achieving the best in school, have the desire to excel compared to their classmates, are aware of their obligations as students, and believe in their abilities. The drive for achievement like this is more related to external factors that encourage students to learn. The desire to be appreciated and the desire to be superior to other students can be the hidden motivation behind this reality. In this kind of motivation, students are involved in a learning activity because they want rewards or avoid unwanted things (Nuraini & Laksono, 2019). However, this motivation is needed to arouse students' enthusiasm to start learning (Prast et al., 2018).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the phenomenon of learning motivation shown by elementary school students in Lamba Leda District, information was obtained that high motivation may not be in line with action. This is due to the difference in motivation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Students who have high extrinsic motivation are not necessarily able to show concrete action in their learning. Extrinsic motivations can usually be used as an initial booster for students in learning. Meanwhile, the motivation that should develop is intrinsic. This kind of motivation needs to be instilled by teachers in students. Instilling intrinsic motivation can be done through example and refraction at school.

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