

Parental Involvement in Fostering Children's Learning Motivation

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Abstract

This qualitative research explores the pivotal roles of parents in motivating their children to learn. The study aims to (1) unravel the strategies employed by parents to motivate their children in learning, (2) identify challenges faced by parents in providing compelling motivation, and (3) propose solutions to address these parental difficulties. Employing a qualitative research design, this study focused on investigating parents and students in an Indonesian Elementary School as the participants. Data collection involved observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal recurring difficulties parents and children face in the learning process. From the children's perspective, challenges include difficulty comprehending subject matter, lack of focus during learning sessions, reluctance to study, and excessive reliance on electronic gadgets. These challenges can be particularly daunting for parents, who also face their own obstacles. From the parental standpoint, obstacles include busy schedules, a lack of clarity regarding motivation, and familial issues. Understanding and empathizing with these challenges is crucial for devising effective solutions. This research contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of parent-child interactions related to education. Identifying challenges and proposing solutions is just the first step. It provides a foundation for future interventions that are urgently needed to enhance parental involvement in fostering children's learning motivation. The time to act is now.

Keywords: Parent's role, Learning Motivation, Education

Abstrak

Penelitian kualitatif ini mengeksplorasi peran penting orang tua dalam memotivasi anak belajar di konteks sebuah Sekolah Dasar di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) mengungkap strategi yang dilakukan orang tua dalam memotivasi anaknya dalam belajar, (2) mengidentifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi orang tua dalam memberikan motivasi yang efektif, dan (3) mengusulkan solusi untuk mengatasi kesulitan orang tua tersebut. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif, subjeknya adalah orang tua dan siswa Sekolah Dasar. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi.

Temuan ini mengungkapkan kesulitan berulang yang dihadapi orang tua dan anak dalam proses pembelajaran. Dari sudut pandang anak-anak, tantangannya antara lain kesulitan memahami materi pelajaran, kurang fokus saat belajar, enggan belajar, dan ketergantungan berlebihan pada gadget elektronik. Dari sisi orang tua, kendalanya antara lain jadwal yang padat, ketidakjelasan konsep motivasi, dan permasalahan keluarga.

Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi wawasan berharga mengenai dinamika interaksi orang tua-anak terkait pendidikan. Dengan mengidentifikasi tantangan dan mengusulkan solusi, hal ini memberikan landasan bagi intervensi di masa depan yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterlibatan orangtua dalam menumbuhkan motivasi belajar anak.

Kata kunci: Peran orangtua, Motivasi belajar, Pendidikan

INTRODUCTION

Education is a profound human endeavor dedicated to guiding young individuals toward maturity, shaping their character, and preparing them for life's responsibilities. Rooted in the principles of moral and personal responsibility, happiness, and societal usefulness, the educational process empowers children to navigate life independently and responsibly, guided by the wisdom of adults (Spring, 2000). In the Indonesian context, this journey spans various stages, from Early Childhood Education (PAUD) and Kindergarten (TK) to Elementary School (SD), Junior High School (SMP), Senior High School (SMA), and equivalent levels (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013).

Motivation is central to the educational journey. Winkel (2005) describes it as the internal impetus propelling students to engage in learning activities, sustain commitment, and work towards educational objectives. Parents emerge as crucial motivators, influencing a student's motivation (Ernawati et al., 2022). The support and encouragement offered by parents play a pivotal role in determining the extent of a student's motivation.

Acknowledging parents as family members responsible for guiding and nurturing children, the study recognizes their multifaceted role in shaping their offspring's learning processes. In the current context of remote learning, exacerbated by the challenges of the pandemic, parents take on an added responsibility to motivate and guide their children through the educational journey (Aprianti, 2021; Ilmanto et al., 2021).

While parents play a vital role as motivators, the study emphasizes the need to consider the child's holistic well-being. Neglecting physical and mental health can pose challenges in the learning journey, even with parents excelling as motivators. Fragkiadaki and Ravanis (2021) identify intelligence, talent, interests, motivation, and mental health as critical factors influencing a child's learning process.

Furthermore, the study draws attention to the critical phase of elementary school, where many students may lose motivation due to a lack of parental involvement. It underscores the importance of parental support, especially for younger children grappling with school lessons. Addressing the impact of gadgets on learning, the study advocates for supervised usage and setting limits to prevent distractions (Keumala et al., 2019). In pursuing compelling motivation and education, parents are urged to maintain strong connections with their children, fostering love, strengthening relationships, and nurturing cooperation.

In conclusion, this introduction underscores the pressing need to address challenges and provide solutions for parents striving to motivate their children's learning. In the era of technology, parental negligence in motivation and education can detrimentally affect a child's learning process (Apdillah et al., 2022; Chitiyo & Pietrantoni, 2019). Motivating children is a pivotal aspect of education, and parents are entrusted with a profound responsibility. Hence, the research aims to delve into this critical topic through the study.

METHOD

In this study, a qualitative research method was employed to provide a comprehensive exploration of the roles of parents in motivating their children to learn. The chosen methodological framework focused on the case study approach, leveraging its capacity to offer detailed empirical evidence, which is particularly suited for theory testing. The case study method, guided by a theoretical framework, played a crucial role in the research process and the subsequent data analysis (Feagin et al., 2016). By concentrating on qualitative data, this method facilitated a profound understanding of the intricate dynamics surrounding the motivational aspects of parental involvement, rendering it particularly valuable for broader applications.

Participants in this study consisted of three students and their respective parents, selected through purposive sampling. As Merriam (1988) outlined, this technique involves the deliberate selection of participants based on specific characteristics that align with the research questions, ensuring that the sample is well-suited to address the study's objectives. The parents of the students served as the primary resource persons, providing crucial insights into the motivational dynamics within the family context. Their participation in the study was contingent upon obtaining permission from the participants.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation, aligning with the qualitative nature of the research. These methods facilitated the gathering of rich, contextual data, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the parental roles in motivating their children to learn. The triangulation of multiple data sources aimed to enhance the credibility and reliability of the study findings (Hollstein, 2011).

Using a qualitative case study approach and purposive sampling ensured a targeted and in-depth examination of parents' roles in motivating their children. The methodological choices made in this study were deliberate, aiming to provide a nuanced, theory-grounded exploration of the subject matter.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Roles of Parents in Motivating Their Children

The role of parents as motivators significantly influences the quality of a child's learning, with various challenges arising from parental actions and the children's obstacles. How parents implement motivation, primarily through disciplinary measures, dramatically impacts the child's learning development. Compelling parental motivation correlates with positive learning outcomes in children. Results from interviews with parents revealed several methods employed to motivate their children:

a. encouragement:

Parents commonly resort to providing verbal encouragement to motivate their children. Children receiving consistent encouragement often exhibit higher levels of happiness and a

heightened desire to excel academically. For instance, Mrs. N, a parent of a sixth-grade student, emphasized that her child, undergoing puberty, responded well to verbal encouragement without the need for additional motivational methods.

b. Gifts as Motivators:

Offering tangible incentives, such as toys or food, is another prevalent method parents employ to instill enthusiasm for learning. Mr. M, a parent of a third-grade student, shared that she occasionally provided rewards to her child to encourage studying, considering her son's position as the youngest child and the resultant indulgence by the parents.

c. Playtime Opportunities:

Some parents granted their children the freedom to engage in play activities, recognizing the importance of play for elementary school students. Mrs. K, the guardian of a first-grade student, acknowledged the challenging family circumstances but emphasized the role of playtime in diverting the child's attention from familial problems and maintaining a positive learning atmosphere.

The research included observations of three students, shedding light on the influence of parental roles as educators at home:

Observation of APR (Grade 6):

APR reported that parental guidance in studying, especially with schoolwork, was prevalent. The mother played a more active role, but both parents contributed. APR highlighted occasional motivational support from his father, particularly during moments of academic struggle.

Observation of HKR (Grade 3):

HKR acknowledged the consistent guidance received from both parents. The father was actively motivated by supportive words, gifts, and food before study sessions, which contributed to sustained enthusiasm.

Observation of RBA (Grade 1):

Despite familial challenges, RBA demonstrated enthusiasm for learning under her grandmother's guidance. The grandmother offered advice and occasional toys to motivate the child.

Parents' Difficulties

a. Difficulty in Understanding Material:

Some children struggle to comprehend academic material, often requiring additional tutoring. Parents must address this issue promptly, providing necessary support and resources.

b. Lack of Focus on Learning:

Elementary school students may struggle to focus due to their instinct to play. Parents play a crucial role in enhancing children's focus through appropriate interventions.

c. Laziness to Study:

Learning laziness is a common issue, requiring proactive measures from parents to rekindle motivation and instill a love for learning.

d. Gadget Addiction:

The prevalence of gadgets poses a challenge, diverting children's attention from academic pursuits. Parental negligence in monitoring gadget use contributes to this issue, impacting academic performance and intellectual development.

Parents' Solutions

a. Allocating Time for Motivation:

Busy parents must prioritize allocating time to guide their children's learning and provide motivation. This commitment fosters a positive relationship and supports the child's development.

b. Improving Understanding of Motivation:

Parents need to enhance their understanding of effective motivational strategies. Addressing cases where parents lack comprehension of motivation is essential to ensure they serve as effective bridges in their children's learning process.

c. Appreciating Enthusiasm for Learning:

Regardless of academic outcomes, parents should appreciate and acknowledge their children's enthusiasm for learning, particularly when faced with family problems.

Discussion

The role of parents in motivating student learning is indispensable for a child's holistic development. Parental influence extends beyond academic outcomes, impacting a child's responsiveness, focus, and ability to overcome distractions such as gadget addiction. Despite common challenges, parents' dedication to providing motivation remains crucial. The findings emphasize that many parents are cognizant of these challenges and actively strive to overcome them, underscoring parents' pivotal role in shaping their children's educational journey. This research contributes valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of parental roles in motivating children's learning, advocating for proactive parental involvement to address challenges and foster a positive learning environment.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The pivotal role of parents in shaping the trajectory of children's learning is unequivocal. Beyond their fundamental responsibilities as caregivers, parents are crucial motivators in the intricate process of a child's educational journey. The motivation instilled by parents serves as a catalyst, igniting the flame of enthusiasm within children, particularly among elementary school students. Parents must comprehend how children absorb motivation, recognizing that each child possesses a unique cognitive and emotional framework.

Fostering learning motivation demands a strategic approach to captivate a child's interest in the educational process. Parents must take the initiative to devise creative ideas that resonate

with their children, conveying that motivation encourages them to embark on an exciting learning journey. However, this initiative comes with the responsibility of understanding the psychological conditions of the child, ensuring that the motivation is not only provided but also effectively received.

The study has unearthed several challenges in parental roles in motivating children's learning. While this research has addressed some of these challenges, it is acknowledged that myriad obstacles are yet to be explored due to the limitations imposed by the research subjects. Nevertheless, even the few obstacles examined here underscore the profound impact of motivation on a student's learning development.

In conclusion, this study has identified solutions to some challenges. However, it is crucial to recognize that the role of parents as motivators is an evolving process, and challenges persist. To further enhance the benefits derived from this research, the following suggestions are presented:

a. For Parents:

Encourage parents to provide objective motivation aligned with their child's interests periodically. This need not be a continuous effort but should be employed strategically during phases when the child displays reluctance toward learning.

b. For Children:

Educate elementary school children about the meaning of motivation and cultivate an appreciation for their parents' efforts in fulfilling their role as motivators.

c. For Teachers:

Acknowledge students' internal problems and assume an active role in addressing them. Teachers should create an open forum for guidance, allowing students to express and discuss familial challenges impacting their learning.

d. For Government:

Recognize the significance of family dynamics in shaping a student's educational journey. Governments can contribute by offering free tutoring and psychological guidance to students with special needs, fostering a conducive academic success environment.

In addressing these recommendations collectively, a collaborative effort from parents, children, teachers, and the government can pave the way for a more supportive and enriching learning environment, ensuring the holistic development of the next generation.

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