



The Role of Teachers in Cultivating Elementary School Students' Interest in Learning: in Mathematics Learning

Sumarno ^{1*}

¹SMPN 2 Kulisusu

ABSTRACT

Abstracts This article examines in depth the strategic role of teachers in fostering elementary school students' interest in mathematics. In the context of 21st-century education and the current digital era, teachers are required not only to deliver material but also to act as facilitators, motivators, classroom managers, and moral role models capable of creating a learning atmosphere that is enjoyable and relevant to students' real lives. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with secondary data sources in the form of relevant journals and books. The results of the study indicate that the role of teachers is crucial in fostering students' interest in learning through a contextual, interactive, and adaptive learning approach to individual students' needs. Strategies used by teachers, such as math games, project-based learning, and the use of educational technology, can stimulate curiosity and increase student engagement in the learning process. In addition, collaboration with parents and emotional support from teachers are important factors in building student self-confidence and learning motivation. This study also highlights the importance of teacher reflection on the effectiveness of the methods used and the need for ongoing training to improve the quality of learning. In conclusion, teachers have an integral role in fostering elementary school students' interest in mathematics through a creative, relevant, and student-centered approach, which directly impacts their academic achievement and character development.

Keywords: The Role of Teachers, Learning Interest, Elementary School Students, Mathematics Learning

1. Introduction

In today's digital era, knowledge and technology have brought about significant changes in the education system, with a particular emphasis on learning in schools. The way students engage with teachers and learning materials in the classroom, or in classroom life, determines learning. The use of technology in education has an impact on the learning process. One benefit is the ease with which students can access information to support the learning process. Technology allows students to quickly submit questions whenever they want. They can view news, watch videos, and also conduct information searches to gain additional knowledge about the material being taught.

Despite its significant benefits to the learning process, technology also has a negative impact on students' learning interests. Without the proper use of technology, students can easily be tempted to engage in harmful activities such as copyright infringement, excessive online gaming, and other digital entertainment. Therefore, teachers should concentrate on utilizing technology and managing time to maintain students' interests. Interest is a state of developing a tendency and desire to pursue something without pressure (Slameto, 2010). The desire to learn plays a crucial role in lessons, motivating students to stay focused and engaged in learning in elementary school. Dhian (2016) highlights nine roles teachers play in the teaching and learning process. More specifically, teachers are categorized as providers and organizers of information, motivators or promoters of students, directors or initiators, and simultaneously serving as moderators, facilitators, and

educators. In addition to mastering the subject matter, teachers present real-life scenarios.

Teachers have a significant influence on students' attitudes and interests in learning mathematics. Through their teaching methods, teachers can foster student interest by making mathematics learning engaging and relevant to their daily lives. By using innovative approaches and interactive learning methods, you can increase student interest in mathematics. A teacher's role also includes the ability to identify students' learning difficulties in mathematics. By understanding each student deeply, teachers can help them overcome challenges in a targeted and appropriate manner. Teachers are not only responsible for teaching but also play a crucial role in supporting their students' academic growth. The learning environment created by teachers significantly influences students' interest in mathematics.

A positive, collaborative, and inclusive classroom atmosphere can motivate students to actively participate in mathematics learning. Teachers can also utilize technology and other resources to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences for students. The importance of teacher qualifications and competencies in teaching mathematics cannot be overstated. Teachers who possess in-depth knowledge of mathematics material and effective teaching strategies will be better able to guide students to a sound understanding of mathematical concepts. This quality of teaching will also directly impact students' interest and academic achievement. Parents and families also play a crucial role in fostering students' interest in learning mathematics. Collaboration between teachers, parents, and students can create holistic support for mathematics learning. Through open communication and close collaboration, parents can help maintain their children's motivation and interest in learning mathematics beyond the school environment.

2. Methods

This study employed a qualitative method, presenting data descriptively. The descriptive approach aims to explain the material studied as it is. The data sources were derived from research journal articles and books relevant to the study. Data collection was conducted by analyzing research journals and books related to the theme of education and learning. Data were analyzed in several steps: 1) Understanding the theme that would serve as a reference for creating the title, 2) Determining a title that aligns with the theme, 3) Searching for and analyzing data obtained from journal articles and books, 4) Selecting topics related to the research.

3. Findings and Discussions

According to Slameto (2013), interest is a feeling of liking or attachment to something or an activity, even if no one teaches it. In other words, interest is the extent to which a person receives external stimulation, and thus, interest actually increases with age. Pursuing knowledge can enhance one's character by instilling positive traits such as creativity, emotion, initiative, and cognitive, emotional, or psychomotor changes, without the need to impose individual qualities on others. Several factors influence student interest, including: First; internal factors (individuals), including physical condition, emotional state, and feelings. To facilitate the learning process, a healthy mental state is necessary to effectively absorb lessons.

Second; external factors (other people), including teachers as motivators, educators, instructors, and facilitators. Students become less interested and enthusiastic in participating in subsequent learning when the teacher responsible for their learning provides a boring learning experience. In principle, all elementary

school students have the right to maximize their learning outcomes. Each student has different circumstances, including physical, family, economic, intelligence, and learning behavior. These characteristics vary from one student to another. Some students experience learning difficulties in class. Learning challenges arise when students are unable to understand what is being taught, even when teachers assign them assignments. Furthermore, if a student's learning adaptation is not optimal, they will experience learning disabilities. Learning disabilities are difficulties that cause discomfort during learning. Mathematics can be a less engaging subject, resulting in many students not learning optimally. Teachers are individuals with in-depth knowledge and specialized skills in a particular field of study or subject. They not only impart knowledge to students but also help guide the learning process by providing motivation and facilitation. Educators are not only educators but also mentors who help students reach their maximum potential.

The functions or duties performed by a teacher during the teaching and learning process are called "roles." Teachers hold various important roles, for example: First, as teaching assistants or facilitators. Teachers are responsible for guiding students' learning process and providing guidance. This approach combines various teaching methods, including group discussions, experiments, projects, and technology to enhance conceptual understanding. Teachers are not only responsible for teaching but also for fostering collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking among students. Second, as motivators, as the primary motivators in the classroom, teachers are responsible for stimulating students' interest in learning. Several approaches are used to stimulate curiosity, determine the relevance of learning material to students' lives, and provide the necessary support to maintain their interest. Third, as classroom managers, teachers act as effective classroom managers by creating a structured and conducive learning environment. This includes establishing clear classroom rules, actively managing student behavior, effectively managing learning time, and building positive relationships with students. Fourth, as assessors, teachers play a crucial role in assessing student progress.

This includes designing and administering assignments, exams, projects, and other tests to measure students' understanding of the subject matter. In addition, educators provide valuable feedback to students to help them understand their abilities. Fifth, role models. As role models, teachers not only teach academic subjects but also demonstrate the behavior expected of responsible, polite, and ethical students. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' moral and ethical values through their role models in daily school life. The role of teachers extends beyond classroom instruction; they are also crucial in developing students' morals and character. A teacher's ability to provide education is one of many factors that determine the success of educational programs in schools. A teacher's primary role as an educator is to set an example for students, modeling good behavior for them, and shaping their character. Educating and supervising students, understanding their problems, identifying issues related to the learning process, and ultimately, solving problems and finding solutions are all part of an educator's job description. Each of these roles is interconnected and enables teachers to provide meaningful learning experiences for their students, preparing them for success in a complex and rapidly changing world.

A teacher's efforts are efforts or teachings that teach something fundamental. The activities or methods presented in this lesson are the activities or methods teachers use to increase students' interest in learning and their ability to complete the learning process. Teachers can use engaging teaching strategies such as project-based learning, simulations, and math games to not only teach concepts

but also develop important skills like problem-solving and creative thinking. Take a holistic approach that uses differentiated learning to meet students' needs. This might include providing supplemental materials to students who need additional work or providing additional support to students who are struggling.

Structured reflection after class is important to give students the opportunity to assess their understanding and identify areas that require further attention. It is important for teachers to select relevant and engaging learning materials. For example, you can use customized learning materials or use adaptive learning software to meet individual student needs. Encourage students to actively participate in the selection and use of learning resources by reading additional math books or exploring interactive math applications. Integrating resources outside the classroom, such as field trips to places where mathematics is applied in practice, can enhance students' understanding of the relevance of mathematics in real life. Of course, I will add additional discussion for each sub-topic regarding the role of teachers in fostering elementary school students' interest in learning mathematics.

Teachers can utilize a contextual approach to teaching mathematics by linking concepts to real-life problems relevant to students' lives. Facilitate classroom discussions or collaborative projects that encourage students to find mathematical solutions to current problems, such as environmental or local economic issues. Invite professionals or experts who use mathematics in their work to share their experiences and practical applications of mathematical concepts with students. Teachers can develop strong emotional connections with students by demonstrating interest and concern for their academic and emotional progress. Provide personalized support and guidance in overcoming math difficulties or other learning challenges students may face. Integrate values such as perseverance, role modeling, and cooperation into mathematics learning to build students' character while increasing their interest in the subject. Research shows that effective teachers' role in fostering students' interest in learning can result in significant improvements in their academic achievement, particularly in mathematics. Students who feel motivated to learn tend to have better critical thinking skills and are more confident in solving math problems. The implication of this research is the need for a student-centered learning approach that takes into account the diversity of their interests and learning styles. Therefore, teachers need to continuously develop their classroom management skills and design differentiated learning strategies tailored to student needs.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted, it was concluded that teachers have fulfilled their role in teaching and guiding students in a way that can develop their academic and non-academic interests and talents. Teachers provide attention, build collaborative relationships between teachers and families, provide regular training and lesson plans, and motivate and support the development of students' interests and talents, both in and outside of the classroom. Thus, teachers have fulfilled their role as professionals.

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