



Exploring Teachers' Efforts to Develop Students' Interests and Talents in Elementary Schools

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Info Article

Received: 12 Jul 2021

Revised: 12 Aug 2021

Accepted: 13 Sep 2021

OnlineVersion: 20 Oct 2021

Abstract

This research aims to explore the efforts made by teachers in developing students' interests and talents at school, using a qualitative approach and case studies. Through observations, interviews and document analysis, data was collected from teachers and students involved in the interest and talent development program. The results of the analysis show that there are four main efforts made by teachers, namely creating supportive conditions, developing interest in achievement, increasing student persistence, and implementing differentiated education. Teachers play an active role in motivating, guiding and involving students in various competitions to actualize their interests and talents. These findings provide a new contribution to the understanding of strategies for developing students' interests and talents in the educational environment. The implication of this research is the need for greater support from schools and parents in creating a conducive environment for the development of students' interests and talents. Apart from that, it is also necessary to pay attention to the importance of implementing differentiated education to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Thus, this research provides a more comprehensive view of how teachers can play an effective role in developing students' potential in schools.

Keywords: Exploring; Interest; Talent; Teacher's Efforts

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INTRODUCTION

Education is directed at developing students' human potential in accordance with National Education Standards. Every child has potential that needs to be honed, and the teacher's role is very important in identifying and developing students' interests and talents (Khairah, 2020; Sukarni, 2021; Veloso et al., 2021). Interest, as a feeling of interest, encourages students to achieve better (Ramil, 2020; Warsihna et al., 2020). Talent, which is inherent in individuals from birth, needs to be channeled and developed through education (Dezaneru & Kurniawan, 2021; Hermawan, 2018).

Students' interests and talents are diverse, including in academic and non-academic fields. However, talents are often not channeled due to lack of awareness or facilities (Abbott, 2017; Nurdanti, 2020). Teachers need to understand students' interests and talents to provide appropriate education. High interest drives talent development, and the two support each other. Interest is a feeling of greater interest or liking for something or an activity without any orders from other people (Anggara, 2021; Ependi & Pratiwi, 2020; Purnama et al., 2020). In another opinion, interest is a constant process of paying attention and focusing on something of interest with feelings of pleasure and satisfaction (Astuti & Fitriani, 2021; Dou et al., 2018).

Student interest plays a key role in an effective learning process, because a strong interest in a material or activity encourages students to learn actively and participate (Novista et al., 2021; Sutanto, 2021; Syawaluddin et al., 2020). When students have a high interest in a particular topic or activity, they tend to be more focused, enthusiastic, and have greater motivation to master the material (Agustina, 2021; Angraini, 2021; Apriana et al., 2019). This can result in more efficient and deeper learning, as well as trigger positive cognitive and emotional growth. Apart from that, a strong interest can also help students overcome learning obstacles, because they tend to be more diligent and persistent in facing challenges. Therefore, understanding and exploiting students' interests in the learning process is key to creating a stimulating and motivating learning environment, thereby enabling students to reach their maximum potential (Baran et al., 2018; Oktaviani, 2020).

Teachers play a very important role in the world of education. In general, a teacher is a person who provides knowledge to students through the formal education process or school. In addition, a teacher is a person who has authority and responsibility for student education, guiding and developing students, both individually and classically, both at school and outside school. Teachers have various efforts to develop students' interests and talents, such as providing diverse experiences, encouraging students, giving praise, providing facilities, and involving parents. SD Negeri 1/IV Jambi City is an example of a school that has succeeded in developing students' interests and talents, as evidenced by students' achievements in various competitions. Through learning and extracurricular activities, teachers at SD Negeri 1/IV Jambi City guide students to develop their interests and talents. Collaboration with parents is also important in this process. Research on teachers' efforts to develop students' interests and talents in elementary schools aims to provide an overview and reference source for improving the quality of education and managing students' talents and interests.

Research on teachers' efforts to develop students' interests and talents in elementary schools has significant implications in the educational context. By understanding effective strategies and practices in developing students' interests and talents, schools and teachers can improve the quality of education and student learning outcomes. The practical implication of this research is to provide insight and consideration for schools in improving learning approaches that suit individual student needs. This research aims to describe the efforts made by teachers in developing students' interests and talents in elementary schools.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This research was designed as a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand and explain the phenomenon of developing students' interests and talents in elementary schools in depth. Through this approach, researchers can explore the experiences and perceptions of research subjects, namely IC class teachers, VB class teachers, PJOK teachers, and students, regarding their efforts in developing students' interests and talents. Phenomenology allows researchers to explore the meaning underlying the actions carried out by research subjects, as well as investigate how certain factors influence this process (Mardiana & Ganda, 2021; Sunhaji, 2021). Thus, the phenomenological approach will provide deep insight into the complexity and dynamics of developing students' interests and talents in elementary schools.

Research Target/Subject

The main aim of this research is to describe the efforts made by teachers in developing students' interests and talents in elementary schools. Research subjects included IC class teachers, VB class teachers, PJOK teachers, and three students from SDN 1/IV Jambi City. The choice of this subject is based on the role of those directly involved in the education and development process of students. These teachers are deemed to have a deep understanding of the challenges and strategies involved in developing students' interests and talents, while students are selected to provide a first-hand perspective from the

recipients of such efforts (Motevalli et al., 2020). Through the participation of this research subject, it is hoped that various best practices and challenges faced in developing students' interests and talents in elementary schools can be revealed.

Research Procedure

The research procedure consists of several systematic stages. First, the preparation stage includes preparing research instruments, including observation sheets, interview guides, and documentation checklists. Next, the researcher will meet and obtain permission from the research subjects, and explain the research objectives to them. The implementation stage includes data collection through observation, interviews and documentation according to the instruments that have been prepared. After the data is collected, the researcher will begin the data analysis stage. Finally, the researcher will prepare a research report based on the findings obtained from data analysis.

Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

The research instrument includes an observation sheet to record activities and interactions in the classroom, an interview guide to direct conversations with research subjects, and a documentation checklist to collect information from related documents. Data collection techniques include direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to observe practices in developing students' interests and talents in the classroom environment. Interviews are used to gain deeper insight from teachers and students about their efforts in developing students' interests and talents (Yanti et al., 2020). Meanwhile, documentation is used to collect secondary data from various related documents, such as school programs and student achievement records.

Data analysis technique

Data analysis was carried out through several stages. First, the data will be reduced, namely identifying the main themes and grouping relevant data. Furthermore, the data will be presented in narrative or tabular form to facilitate understanding. The final stage is verification or drawing conclusions, where the researcher will re-examine the findings that have been presented and ensure they match the raw data collected. This process will produce an in-depth and detailed interpretation of the teacher's efforts in developing students' interests and talents in elementary school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at SD Negeri 1/IV Jambi City with the research subjects being an IC class teacher, a VB class teacher, a PJOK teacher, and three students. This research was carried out in odd semesters. Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews and documentation techniques. The research results will then be analyzed by researchers. There are four indicators found from this research, namely developing the situation and conditions of students, developing interests and motives for high achievement in students, increasing persistence and fighting power in students, and also developing differentiated education programs in schools.

Data will be obtained through observing teachers' efforts to develop students' interests and talents. Furthermore, through interviews with predetermined informants, namely the IC class teacher, VB class teacher, PJOK teacher, and three students. Then, carry out documentation activities by collecting photos and other documents related to the teacher's efforts to develop the interests and talents of elementary school students. After researchers conducted research, it was discovered that teachers at SD Negeri 1/IV Jambi City had made efforts to develop students' interests and talents.

The results of interviews with IC class teachers show that the development of students' interests and talents in SD 1 has begun to increase. The VB class teacher stated that despite the Covid-19 pandemic, efforts to develop students' interests and talents were still ongoing. From the results of the

interview, it is known that this school has developed the interests and talents of its students with the efforts of teachers.

The teacher's efforts to develop students' interests and talents can be seen from several aspects. First, teachers always try to develop students' situations and conditions which provide the widest possible opportunities for students to develop their interests and talents. Second, teachers strive to develop high achievement motives in students, both in the family, school and community environments. Third, teachers also try to increase students' persistence and fighting power in facing various challenges and problems. Finally, teachers also strive to develop differentiated learning in schools to provide more effective services to students who have interests and talents. The data on research findings obtained by researchers from informants during the research process in accordance with these four indicators can be explained further.

From the results of observations and interviews, it appears that teachers and schools provide considerable support to students in developing their interests and talents. Teachers always try to provide adequate platforms and facilities for students to channel their interests and talents, both through extracurricular activities and in daily learning (Bahira, 2021; Hayati et al., 2020). Apart from that, teachers also work together with parents to provide holistic support for the development of students' interests and talents in elementary school.

Developing high achievement motives in students is an important step for teachers in helping students explore their potential and talents. Teachers not only provide lessons in the classroom, but also create an environment that supports student development outside class hours. By providing examples of competition and showing examples of achievers, students will be motivated to pursue achievements. Not only at school, but students' interests and talents are also developed outside the school environment. Many students are actively looking for opportunities to take courses or tutoring that suit their interests. Support from parents is also an important factor in this process. With support from teachers at school and parents at home, students feel encouraged to continue developing their interests and talents.

Developing students' interests and talents is not only carried out through formal learning in the classroom, but also through extracurricular activities. At this school, students are given the opportunity to take part in various extracurricular activities such as scouts, drumband, dance, and so on. By participating in these activities, students can explore their interests and talents more widely. Apart from that, teachers also develop differentiated learning programs to provide more effective services to students with diverse interests and talents. In differentiated learning, students are given the opportunity to express themselves and do assignments according to their interests, talents and creativity. This helps students feel valued and motivated to learn better.

Teachers' efforts to develop students' interests and talents are very important to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. By creating an environment that takes into account the diversity of students' interests and talents, schools can become a fun place for students to explore and develop their potential optimally. In facing challenges and difficulties in developing students' interests and talents, it is important for teachers to increase students' persistence and fighting power. One way to do this is to provide high levels of motivation to students. This motivation helps spur students' fighting power to achieve their goals. Apart from that, teachers also guide students in solving various challenges or problems, such as working on math problems from the lowest level to the highest. In this way, students are not only able to solve the problems they face, but also increase their optimism and resilience.

Participation in competitions is also one way to develop students' persistence and fighting power. Through competitions, students have the opportunity to test their abilities and achieve proud achievements. In this way, students' persistence and fighting power can continue to be improved, and their interests and talents can be channeled well. Furthermore, developing differentiated education programs in schools is important considering the differences in interests and talents of each student. Differentiated learning allows teachers to adapt learning to each student's needs, interests and learning styles. Teachers can develop differentiated learning lesson plans that consider student learning needs. Apart from that, teachers also apply various differentiated learning strategies, such as content, process and

product differentiation. In this way, students can learn effectively according to their abilities and interests, and develop creativity in learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, there are four efforts made by teachers to develop students' interests and talents. First, teachers develop students' situations and conditions by providing infrastructure, inviting students to practice, taking part in extracurricular activities, providing appreciation, and collaborating with students' parents. Second, teachers develop interest and motivation for high achievement by depicting competition and showing good examples to students. Third, teachers increase students' persistence and fighting power by providing motivation, guiding students in overcoming problems, and involving students in competitions. Fourth, teachers develop differentiated education programs by preparing differentiated learning plans and freeing students to do assignments in various forms. These efforts aim to develop students' interests and talents so that they can achieve optimal performance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all respondents who participated in this research and shared their experiences and insights. Also, thank you to the school and parents for their support and cooperation in making this research carried out smoothly.

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