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# Analysis Of The Role Of Teachers As Motivators In Improving Elementary School Students' Learning Motivation: A Phenomenological Study In Grade IV Of SDN 1 Teniga

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**Abstract**

*This study aims to deeply analyze the teacher's strategy as a motivator, explore the impact of the teacher's role on student learning motivation, and identify supporting and inhibiting factors in increasing student learning motivation, specifically in grade IV of SDN 1 Teniga in the 2025/2026 academic year. This research design uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological type of research, aiming to explore phenomena directly from the subject's perspective. Research subjects were selected using purposive sampling techniques, consisting of the principal, grade IV teachers, and several grade IV students of SDN 1 Teniga. Data collection was conducted comprehensively through participant observation techniques, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. The data analysis process refers to the interactive model, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was tested through source, technique, and time triangulation, as well as member checking. The results showed that: (1) The teacher's strategy as a motivator is implemented through creating a pleasant learning atmosphere using educational games and technology, providing rewards such as verbal praise and certificates, and providing intensive motivation and advice. (2) The impact of optimizing the teacher's role as a motivator can be seen in a significant increase in enthusiasm and interest in learning, the growth of students' self-confidence in expressing opinions, and a strong drive towards achieving academic achievements. (3) Factors supporting this success include affective support from teachers, a clean and conducive learning environment, and the use of varied and interactive learning methods. On the other hand, inhibiting factors still encountered include fluctuations in students' internal learning interests, as well as a lack of optimal support from the family environment and limited supporting facilities at home. Overall, the active role of the teacher as a motivator makes an essential contribution in determining the quality and sustainability of student learning motivation in elementary schools.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental foundation in developing competent, character-based, and globally competitive human resources. In accordance with the objectives of the National Education System as stipulated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003, education is defined as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students are able to develop their potential actively and comprehensively. Success in achieving these educational goals does not solely depend on the availability of luxurious infrastructure or a dense curriculum, but is strongly influenced by students' psychological aspects, one of the most crucial

variables of which is learning motivation (Arikunto, 2023). Learning motivation acts as a driving force both from within (intrinsic) and from outside (extrinsic) that directs students' behavior to actively engage in academic activities, maintains consistent effort, and determines how much energy is devoted to understanding the material (Dimyati & Mudjiono, 2023).

In empirical reality, the phenomenon of low learning motivation is still frequently encountered in various educational institutions, including elementary schools. Symptoms such as passivity in class, reluctance to participate in discussions, lack of curiosity, and easy boredom are key indicators of weakening student motivation (Sari, 2023). This condition indicates the presence of cognitive and affective internalization barriers in children. If left unchecked, this decline in motivation not only impacts low academic achievement but also threatens the achievement of national education goals (Djamarah, 2022). Therefore, a teacher's presence should not be interpreted merely as a conveyor of information (transfer of knowledge). Furthermore, teachers carry out multidimensional roles as facilitators, educators, guides, and most importantly, as motivators capable of touching the psychological and emotional aspects of students (Mulyasa, 2023).

As learning agents, teachers are required to possess a high level of sensitivity in recognizing the diverse characteristics of their students. According to Abdul Majid (2023), professional teachers must be able to arouse children's curiosity and design a supportive classroom ecosystem. The teacher's role as a motivator requires concrete affirmative action, ranging from creating a cheerful and non-threatening classroom atmosphere, using empowering language, to implementing proportional reward strategies. Previous studies have consistently shown a positive correlation between teacher performance as a motivator and increased student active participation (Khotimah, 2021; Khalifah, 2023). However, the challenges in implementing this role continue to grow, especially in the post-pandemic era and the digitalization of education, where external distractions are increasing (Saumi, 2021).

Based on preliminary observations conducted in fourth-grade students at SDN 1 Teniga, North Lombok Regency, interesting dynamics related to student learning motivation were identified. In general, students demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm, expressed their opinions, and actively participated in both group and individual assignments. The success in creating this lively classroom climate is strongly associated with the classroom teacher's adaptive and innovative strategies. The teacher applied various affective approaches, ranging from providing verbal appreciation and creating educational games to providing personalized guidance for students experiencing difficulties (Apriani, 2021). Despite the generally positive trend, the fourth-grade teachers at SDN 1 Teniga also faced several challenges, such as differences in students' family backgrounds and the availability of independent learning facilities at home (Zakiah, 2024).

Based on the background and urgency of the problem above, this study specifically aims to analyze in depth and holistically the role of teachers as motivators in increasing student learning motivation in Grade IV of SDN 1 Teniga. More specifically, this study focuses on three main formulations, namely: (1) What strategies are implemented by grade IV teachers as motivators in increasing student learning motivation; (2) What is the impact of the implementation of the motivator role on changes in student behavior and learning motivation; and (3) What are the ecological factors that support and hinder teachers in the process of stimulating student learning motivation. It is hoped that the findings of this study can contribute theoretically in enriching the treasure trove of basic education knowledge, as well as providing practical recommendations for educators and policymakers at the school level.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was designed using a qualitative approach with a phenomenological approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand phenomena experienced

by research subjects, such as behavior, perception, motivation, and actions, holistically and in-depth. The phenomenological approach was specifically selected because the focus of this study is not merely to describe teachers' motivational strategies as observable actions, but to uncover the meaning that teachers and students themselves attach to those strategies as lived experiences, something that a purely observational or quantitative design would not adequately capture. The experiences explored with the informants were characterized by their direct, first-hand, and repeated nature, namely the teachers' everyday lived experience of designing and delivering motivational strategies in the classroom, and the students' lived experience of receiving encouragement, appreciation, and guidance from their teachers, both of which are internal and subjective in nature and therefore require an approach that prioritizes the informants' own perspectives. Phenomenology was applied to explore the essence of teachers' and students lived experiences in the field related to efforts to foster learning motivation, prioritizing a naturalistic perspective (Satori & Komariah, 2021). The research was conducted at SDN 1 Teniga, located in Teniga Village, Tanjung District, North Lombok Regency, and was conducted during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

The determination of informants in this study used a purposive sampling technique, namely a technique for sampling data sources with certain considerations that are considered to be most knowledgeable about what is expected (Sugiyono, 2023). The main subjects of the study included the Principal, Grade IV Teachers, and representatives of Grade IV students of SDN 1 Teniga who were selected based on criteria for activeness in class. Data collection techniques were carried out through three main instruments: (1) Passive participant observation, where researchers directly observed the process of pedagogical interactions in the classroom to see the actualization of the teacher's role and student responses; (2) In-depth interviews based on semi-structured guidelines to gather comprehensive information regarding teacher views, strategies, and obstacles; and (3) Documentation studies to collect secondary data such as Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP/Teaching Modules), school profiles, attendance lists, and photo documentation of learning activities (Idrus, 2021).

The qualitative data analysis process in this study refers to the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2023), which occurs simultaneously through three stages of activity. The first stage is data condensation, which is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting raw data from field notes and interview transcripts. In practice, this stage began with open coding, in which each meaningful excerpt from the interview transcripts and observation notes was given a descriptive label (for example, "fun learning atmosphere," "affective reward," "personal guidance," "internal interest fluctuation," and "family support disparity"). These codes were then compared and grouped into broader thematic categories through a constant-comparison process, resulting in the three main themes reported in this study, namely teacher strategies as motivators, the impact of the motivator role on student behavior, and supporting and inhibiting factors. The second stage is data display, where the coded and categorized information is organized in narrative form to facilitate understanding of patterns. The third stage is conclusion drawing and verification, which involves constructing conceptual meanings from the observed phenomena. To ensure data credibility and validity (trustworthiness), the researcher rigorously applied triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by cross-checking information from teachers, students, and the principal. Technical triangulation was carried out by comparing interview results, observations, and documents. Furthermore, member checking was also carried out to ensure that the researcher's interpretations aligned with the informants' intentions (Suparno, 2021).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section outlines empirical findings in the field obtained through a series of observations, interviews, and document analysis, which are then examined through an educational theoretical lens.

Based on the research focus, the discussion is divided into three main domains: (1) Teacher strategies as motivators; (2) The impact of the motivator role on students; and (3) Analysis of supporting and inhibiting factors.

**Teacher Strategies as Motivators in Increasing Learning Motivation**

The teacher's role as a motivator plays a central role in orchestrating learning. Teachers not only transfer academic knowledge but also manage the emotional climate of the classroom. Based on findings at SDN 1 Teniga, there are three key strategies implemented by fourth-grade teachers:

First, Creating a Fun Learning Atmosphere. Based on observations and interviews with the class teacher, Mr. Hardianto, it was revealed that the teacher consistently initiated learning with activities that aroused students' positive emotions. The use of interactive educational game platforms, such as Educandy, Quizizz, and a variety of thematic icebreakers, was a primary choice (Sari et al., 2022). This strategy is highly relevant to the constructivist learning theory of Piaget and Vygotsky, which states that the cognitive assimilation and accommodation processes of elementary school-aged children (the concrete operational phase) will work optimally in a happy and stress-free environment (Slavin, 2021). The principal, Mr. Adnan, also emphasized that the teacher's innovation in utilizing projectors and smartboards has disrupted students' boredom with conventional lecture methods.

Second, Providing Rewards Based on Affective Appreciation. Field findings indicate that rewards at SDN 1 Teniga are not exclusive to high-achieving students academically, but encompass the entire spectrum of student development. Teachers apply a differentiated appreciation approach; high-achieving students are given appreciation in the form of class certificates or achievement stars, while for struggling students, appreciation is given in the form of verbal affirmations such as direct praise ("Wow, you're a great student, your effort is really good!"). This has been proven to confirm B.F. Skinner's theory of positive reinforcement, where a positive response from an authority figure (the teacher) effectively reinforces students' learning behavior (Astuti, 2022). Linda Zakiah (2024) in her study, also concluded that targeted appreciation is the key to unlocking the gates of intrinsic motivation in elementary students.

Third, Providing Motivation, Personal Guidance, and Advice. In addition to the classical approach, teachers also provide personal guidance. The advice provided is oriented towards developing a growth mindset, where failure is not seen as stupidity, but rather as a learning process. Through interviews, students reported feeling protected and cared for when teachers took the time to ask about their difficulties. This close emotional connection represents the fulfillment of basic human needs for safety and affection, as outlined in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which is an absolute prerequisite for students to actualize themselves in academic activities (Djaali, 2021).

**The Impact of the Motivator's Role on Student Behavior and Motivation**

Pedagogical interventions in the form of motivation consistently implemented by fourth-grade teachers have resulted in measurable transformations in students. These impacts manifest in several dimensions of constructive behavior:

Increased Enthusiasm and Determination to Learn. Students showed a significant surge in enthusiasm in responding to teacher instructions. Student engagement increased significantly, indicated by disciplined attendance, timely completion of independent assignments, and student initiative to explore reading materials in the classroom literacy corner. With teacher encouragement, students developed a more focused goal orientation, an important indicator of long-term intrinsic motivation (Deci in Dimyati, 2023).

Self-Efficacy Growth. Dialogic guidance from teachers successfully reduced levels of learning anxiety. Observations noted that previously passive students gradually began to raise their hands, ask critical questions, and speak in front of the class without hesitation. This phenomenon aligns with Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which asserts that social persuasion from a credible

figure (the teacher) can convince individuals that they have the capacity to achieve success, thus fostering the courage to explore (Sari, 2023).

Encouraging Academic Achievement. Although formative evaluation results vary among individuals, overall, high motivation has direct implications for improving the quality of learning outcomes. Appreciative applause and constructive formative feedback foster healthy competition among students. They feel motivated to demonstrate their best abilities because they realize that their every step is valued.

**Factors Supporting and Inhibiting Student Learning Motivation**

Increased learning motivation is a product of multivariable interactions. In the context of SDN 1 Teniga, the constellation of supporting and inhibiting factors can be analyzed using a learning ecology approach.

Supporting factors encompass three main elements. First, dedicated teacher support. Teachers' proactive approach to designing thoughtful learning scenarios and high levels of empathy are key factors (Khalifah, 2023). Second, the school's physical environment. Clean classrooms, adequate ventilation, and literacy corner facilities create spatial comfort that reduces cognitive fatigue. Third, varied learning methods. The integration of audio-visual media, concrete teaching aids, and a cooperative inquiry-based approach prevents boredom (monotony), which often kills motivation (Khotimah, 2021).

The identified inhibiting factors centered on two aspects. First, Fluctuations in Students' Internal Interest. Students' unstable psychophysiological conditions, such as physical fatigue or a lack of innate interest in certain subjects (e.g., science), often make it difficult for teachers to penetrate motivation. This pattern was directly captured during classroom observations, where several students appeared visibly drowsy and less responsive during the last teaching hour of the day, and was corroborated by Mr. Hardianto in an interview, who stated that some children were enthusiastic in the morning but their energy dropped noticeably by the time science lessons began, particularly after physical education class. Second, Disparities in Family Support. Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the microsystem (family) environment is crucial (Saumi, 2021). This finding was strongly supported by the interview with the principal, Mr. Adnan, who highlighted the phenomenon of minimal learning support at home, a lack of independent facilities, and low parental literacy regarding the urgency of education, which ultimately degrades the enthusiasm teachers have worked so hard to build at school. Several student informants also confirmed during interviews that they had no dedicated study space or study companion at home and that their homework was rarely checked by their parents, which reinforces the principal's observation that the motivational efforts built at school were not always sustained in the home environment.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, three main conclusions can be drawn in line with the three research foci. First, regarding teacher strategies, fourth-grade teachers at SDN 1 Teniga acted as motivators primarily through three strategies: creating a fun learning atmosphere, providing affective appreciation and rewards, and offering personal guidance and advice. Second, regarding the impact of this role, these strategies increased students' enthusiasm and classroom engagement, fostered self-efficacy, and encouraged improved academic achievement. Third, regarding the supporting and inhibiting ecological factors, the sustainability of this motivation is strongly supported by teacher competence, a conducive classroom environment, and varied learning methods, but is still constrained by fluctuations in students' internal interest and, most notably, inconsistent support from the family sphere.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools, particularly educators, continuously update their pedagogical competencies and digital media innovation skills to maintain the

attractiveness of learning. Parents and school committees are strongly encouraged to establish more synergistic partnerships (parenting and school collaboration) to ensure the continuity of learning motivation from school to the home environment. For future researchers, this study can serve as a fundamental foundation for conducting studies with further variables, such as the correlation between motivation and numeracy literacy or comparative studies between schools using research and development (R&D) methods.

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