

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTESSORI METHOD IN BUILDING LEARNING MOTIVATION IN LOW ELEMENTARY AT BRAINY BUNCH INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC MONTESSORI SCHOOL, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Montessori method for childhood especially low elementary is needed where the method teaches students to become independent and highly motivated individuals. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Montessori method at the Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School in building self-reliance and motivation in students. This study uses a case study method in qualitative research with descriptive analysis. The determination of participants in this study was carried out using a purposive sampling technique in which the participants included school principals, kindergarten managers, and teachers. The secondary data sources in this study are reference books and journals related to the Montessori method and learning motivation. Data collection techniques using observation techniques, interviews, and documentation. Checking the validity of the data using triangulation. This research shows that the application of the Montessori method in building learning motivation in young children is well done which includes lesson planning, implementation, and learning evaluation. The independent learning contained in the Montessori method has an impact on building students' learning motivation which can be seen from the ability of students to learn independently.

Keywords: *Montessori Methods, Learning Motivation, Low Elementary*

INTRODUCTION

There are many preschool educational institutions or programs all around us today. Each of these programs or institutions has different educational understandings and goals, starting from the curriculum system, teacher training, and the development of classroom management materials and approaches. Among them is the application of teaching and learning activities using the Montessori method for early childhood. Of the various existing methods, the Montessori method is one of the methods used in early childhood education.

The Montessori method was introduced by a female doctor named Maria Montessori. The Montessori method is an education system implemented in the "Children's Home" which originates from the results of Maria Montessori's pedagogical experiences with children who have mental retardation. Then he presented it as a long and thoughtful effort on normal children (Maria Montessori,2013).

Children are not adults who can be treated like adults. Likewise in learning, a child needs a stimulus in accordance with the stages of his development, both physically and psychologically. Differences in the characteristics of children are also an important thing to study. Where the differences in these characteristics can be seen from several aspects, including: physical, intellectual, emotional, social, language, talent as well as aspects of values, morals and attitudes. Each of these aspects shows different individual characteristics, so that each individual as a physical and spiritual entity realizes himself as a whole as his unique form. This uniqueness and difference has imperative implications for every education service to pay attention to the unique and varied characteristics of children. In other words, by knowing the unique and unique characteristics of children's learning; they will be stimulated and facilitated in accordance with these characteristics, so that they can jump-start their natural potential to develop perfectly.

The Montessori method for childhood especially low elementary is needed. The Montessori method directly teaches exercise life practice which teaches students to become independent and highly motivated individuals. This independence grows not only in daily practice, but independence in learning as well. This creates a significant correlation between the application of the Montessori method and the development of learning motivation.



Therefore, with the characteristics of childhood that are unique, egocentric, have high curiosity, are explorative, are rich in fantasy/imagination, and are easily frustrated, the application of the Montessori method helps students to be able to learn independently, and helps teachers so as not to always teach with conventional methods. In addition, learning also attracts the attention of students more so that they are more motivated and eager to learn.

So, in this study, the focus of research is how the process of implementing the Montessori method in building learning motivation in low elementary at the Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School, Malaysia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a case study method in qualitative research with descriptive analysis. The choice of this approach is because the descriptive approach is in accordance with the objectives of this research, which is to describe the empirical reality behind the phenomenon in depth, detail, and thoroughly. This research is located at Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School, Malaysia. The determination of participants in this study was carried out using a purposive sampling technique in which the participants included school principals, kindergarten administrators, and teachers. Secondary data sources in this study are reference books and journals related to the Montessori method and learning motivation. Data collection techniques using observation techniques, interviews, and documentation. Checking the validity of the data using triangulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The most basic principle in Montessori educational theory is that a child's learning ability is fundamentally different from that of an adult. To realize this for ourselves, we need only think of one lesson that both adults and young children attempt to learn, such as learning to read or do math. Adults will understand more quickly and be more systematic than small children. Therefore, the Montessori method tries to adapt the way of learning to young children (David Gettman, 1987). Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School is one of the many schools that uses the Montessori method in its curriculum, especially at the elementary level, namely elementary education, especially low elementary



(6-9 years), with very supportive learning facilities. Schools with this method are different from schools in general. This school is a Montessori based school which is affordable compared to other Montessori schools.

This research was conducted at the Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School, Malaysia. This school uses the Montessori method to teach. Montessori school is a school that embraces holistic education. Holistic education itself is learning in which basically a person can find identity, meaning and purpose in life through his relationship with society and the surrounding environment. It's the same with Montessori itself whose learning is packaged in an activity where children become learning centers, pouring their ideas or ideas from every aspect of children's development.

In Montessori education the main goal is to help the child to help himself. In their development, children will be assisted to become independent, confident, and respectful of differences so that they can become reliable and best citizens of the world according to their own version. Instilling the values of independence and discipline is the initial foundation that must be emphasized so that children can grow into strong human beings. With independent character, children's self-confidence will increase. The child will feel that he is reliable, so that his self-esteem increases, and that is an important key in forming a complete personality for the child.

Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School, is an educational institution that uses the Montessori method in its curriculum, especially at the low elementary level, namely education for children aged 6-9 years, with adequate learning facilities. Schools with this method are different from schools in general. This school is an elite high-cost institution. The implementation of Montessori Learning at Brainy Bunch is not much different from other similar and equivalent institutions in general, which starts with opening activities, core activities, breaks, and closing activities in accordance with Permendikbud No. 103 of 2014 concerning National Standards of Learning In Basic Education And Middle Education that the implementation of learning includes a. Opening Activities, b. Core Activities, and c. Closing Activities. The process of implementing this method, on a daily basis, uses the schedule that has been distributed in each class.

The core activities carried out for approximately ± 3 hours. During this duration it is carried out according to or based on the interests of each child. This means that each child is free to choose their own activities with a variety of demonstration tools in the five Montessori areas that stimulate their senses, knowledge and skills. After walking 2 hours from the main activity, at 12:00 to be precise, it's time for the children to have lunch, after that the children clean themselves and get ready to take a nap (qailulah), followed by midday prayers when they wake up and make their bed they. Then the remaining 1 hour in the core activities is continued according to the theme prepared.

Then continued with tea time, the children ate the snacks they brought themselves, after eating the snacks they took turns taking a shower, changing their clothes and returning to class for the Asar prayer. Then enter the closing activity. The teacher evaluates and gives constructive messages to children.

Miqdad Ibn Amr Aunty Illia & Ust Ridhwan													
	1 7:45-8:45	2 8:45 - 9:15	3 8:45 - 9:45	4 9:45 - 10:45	5 10:45 - 11:45	6 11:45 - 12:45	7 12:45 - 1:30	8 1:30 - 2:00	9 2:00 - 3:00	10 3:00 - 4:00	11 4:00 - 4:30	12 4:30 - 5:00	
Mon.	PE (C. Azwan)	Sholat Dhuha	Sholat Dhuha	BM (C. Falzun)	QUR (U. Ridhwan)	MAN (L. Sa'ira)	Lunch	Sholat Dhuha	WORK CYCLE (A. Illia/ A. Shira/ U. Taufeeq)		Tea time	Nap	
Tues.	ICT (U. Asni)			QUR (U. Ridhwan)	ARB (U. Zie)	APL (C. Alif)			WORK CYCLE (A. Illia/ A. Shira/ U. Taufeeq)				
Wed.	SEERAH (U. Ridhwan)			WORK CYCLE (A. Illia/ A. Shira/ U. Taufeeq)		QUR (U. Ridhwan)			BM (C. Falzun)	AGEE (U. Zulaikha)			
Thurs.	AGEE (U. Zulaikha)			WORK CYCLE (A. Illia/ A. Shira/ U. Taufeeq)		WORK CYCLE (A. Illia/ A. Shira/ U. Taufeeq)			ARB (U. Zie)	QUR (U. Ridhwan)			
Fri.	QUR (U. Ridhwan)			WORK CYCLE (A. Illia/ A. Shira/ U. Taufeeq)		SIL (C. Tush)			Music (U. Firdaus)	SEERAH (U. Ridhwan)			

Picture 1. Daily Schedule Miqdad Class



Picture 2. Activity in Class



Picture 3. Activity in Class

The implementation of the Montessori method carried out in the process of implementing Montessori learning is divided into 5 areas, namely: practical life area, sensory area, cultural area, language area, and math area. The practical life area promotes the development of task organization and cognitive organization through self-care, environmental care, exercises of grace and courtesy, and coordination of physical movements. The sensory areas allow children to sort, classify, and describe sensory impressions in terms of length, width, temperature, mass, color, and so on. The cultural area as an activity exposes children to the foundations of geography, history and life sciences. Music, art, and movement education are part of an integrated cultural curriculum. The area of language as a basic skill in writing and reading is developed through the use of letter cards, alphabet cutouts, and various presentations that allow children to easily connect letter sounds and symbols and express their thoughts through writing. The math area uses manipulative materials to allow children to internalize the concepts of numbers, symbols, sequences, operations, and memorize basic facts (Yunhong Hao & Linda Addie Sarpong, 2018).

Ground Rules

Subject	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
How to walk	✓	✓	✓
How to carry a table	✓	✓	✓
How to queue	✗	✓	✓
How to open and close doors	✓	✓	✓
How to use a book	✗	✓	✓
Removing/wearing shoes	✗	✗	✓

Exercise Practical Life

Subject	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Cut sponges with fingers	✓	✓	✓
Sorting objects with tongs	✓	✓	✓
Assorted bottles	✗	✓	✓
Speaking with Groups	✓	✓	✓
Table Manners	✗	✓	✓
Helping out	✗	✗	✓

From the description of the activities above, we can understand that the Montessori method emphasizes the aspects of independence, discipline, freedom for students, and does not apply rewards and punishments. Aspects of independence and discipline can be seen from several subjects such as EPL (exercise practical life) and ground rules. These two subjects put a fairly strong emphasis on these two aspects.

Montessori activities help improve a children movement control and coordination, muscle synchronization, independence, action analysis, and mastery of tools that contribute to a child's movement or motor development. A series of practical life and play activities are used using very familiar objects; such as plates, buttons, brushes, glasses, and water (Marshall C,2017). Children enjoy playing and doing self-care activities (preparing food and dressing) in an environment prepared by Montessori with various materials and tools. The goal of such activities is to help children gain physical coordination and achieve

complete independence by the age of 6-9. Also, activities are carried out independently both inside and outside the room (R. R. Pate,dkk 2014).

Then the freedom aspect can be seen from the freedom of students in choosing which subject they want to study and the existence of a work cycle. Work cycles, which are blocks of time in the morning and evening, give children enough time to concentrate without being distracted. It is agreed by Montessori experts and Montessori organizations that the work cycle for children three to six years of age is three hours in the morning and at least two additional hours in the afternoon for older children (Lillard A, 2012). Work cycles that are carried out maximally are highly valued in the Montessori method because Montessori goals can be achieved through the expression of children's freedom (independent activity: normalization). Normalization is a Montessori term used to describe when a child, through concentrating on physical activity and his intellect, "goes back to nature" (Amber Chen, 2021).

In the Montessori method, there is no such thing as reward and punishment. Reward means rewards, gifts, awards, or rewards. Reward as an educational tool is given when a child does something good, or a target has been achieved. In the concept of education, reward is a tool to increase the motivation of students. Punishment is defined as punishment or sanction. Punishment is usually carried out when what is a certain target is not achieved, or there is a child's behavior that is not in accordance with the norms believed by the school. If the reward is a positive form of reinforcement; then punishment as a form of negative reinforcement, but if given properly and wisely can be a motivational tool for students.

The reason the Montessori method does not use reward and punishment is because it is temporary. The existence of reward and punishment causes dependence on students. The impact is that students will be more eager to learn because their orientation will get prizes, and they are also eager to learn so they don't get punished. This is different from the Montessori method. In Montessori, learning is understood as a process of gaining knowledge which is why there should be no pressure or other motives other than just to gain knowledge.

Of the four aspects above (independence, discipline, and freedom, there is no reward and punishment), all of these aspects lead to independence learning. Independence learning

or independent learning is an approach to student-centred learning methods in which learning processes and experiences are regulated and controlled by students themselves in terms of conceptualization, design, implementation, and evaluation of learning.

According to Principle, independence learning is what will raise enthusiasm and motivation to learn. When children are given the freedom to determine and choose which subject they will study, then that is where responsibility and curiosity arise. With a great sense of responsibility and curiosity, motivation arises from within to learn because their curiosity is paid off and facilitated. Thus, children learn according to what they want and want to learn.⁸

In line with the opinion above, Noor Shikin (Operational Manager in Brainy Bunch) also stated that freedom and independence learning are able to build motivation to learn naturally. The characteristics of this early childhood can be said to be quite unique because he has a high curiosity, on the other hand he also has unstable emotions and gets bored easily. So in Montessori there is no coercion. If the child doesn't want to learn yet, then he can be transferred to other activities until the child has the motivation to learn on his own. Conversely, if the child learns by coercion, the lower his motivation to learn will be.⁹

Nazri (Teacher in Brainy Bunch) also believes that the Montessori method is very different from conventional methods in terms of learning motivation. In the conventional method, all students follow the same standards in one class and learning focuses on the teacher. In Montessori, learning focuses on the child because the subject of learning is the child himself. This independence learning also provides real sensations and experiences of learning from the child. In Montessori there is learning related to how to do it, tell them to do, and then do it by themselves. These three things are part of independent learning where when the child directly experiences the learning experience, it will be embedded in the child's mind which creates a long-term memory that learning is something fun.

The implementation of the Montessori method is directly proportional to the motivation to learn. Independence learning and freedom of learning, which are part of the Montessori method, actually have a good impact on learning motivation. Independence learning teaches that learning is not because of things or gifts from outside, but that learning is self-driven because they are curious and responsible for what they want and want to do.

This raises intrinsic motivation in students. Students can be said to have the motivation to learn because they need something from what they learn. Motivation is indeed related to someone's need to raise awareness to carry out learning activities.

The Montessori method in low elementary has the principles of freedom, independence and discipline. Some of these principles are translated into activities and learning subjects such as EPL, ground rules, and the work cycle. This creates an independent learning process that has the benefit of increasing academic performance and increasing motivation. This independence in learning is based on the needs of students for the learning process from which intrinsic motivation will arise to learn.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Montessori method in building learning motivation in low elementary student at Brainy Bunch International Islamic Montessori School Malaysia is quite effective according to observations made by researchers, because this method has the principles of freedom, independence, discipline, and does not advocate reward and punishment. The principles in the Montessori method form the character of an independent child. The independence that arises also has an impact on how to learn, independent learning. This independence and freedom opens space for children to explore, so that children become independent not only in their daily activities, but also in learning. When children are able to enjoy what they learn on their own without being restrained, their motivation will grow and develop by itself.

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