THE ROLE OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION ON LEARNING MOTIVATION IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS 37 MEDAN IS MEDIATED BY STUDENT ENGANGEMENT

Rofi Dwi Putri Ramadhani[1a*], Salamiah Sari Dewi[2b], Patisina[3c]

[1,2,3] Ilmu Psikologi, Fakultas Pascasarjana Psikologi, Universitas Medan Area, Indonesia

[a] *rofiramadhani28@gmail.com*
[b] *salamiahsaridewi@staff.uma.ac.id*
[c] *patisina@gmail.com*

(*) Corresponding Author
rofiramadhani28@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
This study aims to explore the dynamics of the relationship between interpersonal communication and student engagement in shaping learning motivation. A quantitative research method was employed to analyze the data. In this study, the sample consisted of 190 participants. The results show that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. This is indicated by a coefficient value of 0.653, a t-statistic of 7.889 (> 1.653), and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Interpersonal communication also has a positive and significant effect on student engagement, as shown by a coefficient value of 0.650, a t-statistic of 9.077 (> 1.653), and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Student engagement, in turn, has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. With a coefficient of 0.662, a t-statistic of 9.502 (> 1.653), and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), it is evident that student involvement in the learning process plays an important role in enhancing learning motivation. Active student engagement enables learners to feel a stronger sense of purpose and drive in their academic pursuits. Furthermore, student engagement partially mediates the effect of interpersonal communication on learning motivation. The direct effect of interpersonal communication on learning motivation is greater (58.4%) compared to the indirect effect through student engagement (43.1%). This indicates that although student engagement serves as a mediator, the direct influence of interpersonal communication remains dominant.

INTRODUCTIONS

According to (Nitbani, 2022) Learning motivation is a change in energy in a person's personality which is characterized by the emergence of affective (feelings) and reactions to achieve goals. The change in energy in a person is in the form of a real activity in the form of physical activity. Student motivation can develop activeness and spontaneity as well as maintain direction and perseverance in carrying out learning activities. Without motivation,

students can become very lazy in learning. Learning motivation plays a very important role in supporting student learning success. Weak or non-existent motivation to learn results in weak activities and low quality of learning outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the learning motivation of first-year students continuously. The goal is for students to have high motivation in learning and achieve optimal learning outcomes. The learning motivation possessed by early grade students in each learning activity plays a very important role in improving student learning outcomes in certain subjects (Sari & Suhaili, 2020).

Students' low motivation to learn can be seen from low interest in doing assignments, quick to give up or give up when encountering difficulties, lack of ability to work independently, and lack of interest in asking questions or opinions and not being able to defend opinions (in Sardiman, 2012). A common phenomenon among students today is that some students spend more time just for entertainment than doing schoolwork. Students who are unable to use their time wisely often waste their time on useless activities. Abandoned or incomplete assignments can lead to student failure or hinder success.

Student motivation is an internal and external drive that makes them want to learn, achieve, and be actively involved in the education process (Emda, 2018). Students who have high motivation, either because of personal desire to excel (intrinsic motivation) or because of environmental encouragement such as parental appreciation or expectations (extrinsic motivation), tend to be more focused, enthusiastic, and do not give up easily when facing learning difficulties.

This phenomenon is evident in various schools. Motivated students will usually be fully engaged in learning: they take notes diligently, ask questions if they don't understand, and even figure out additional material outside of class. They show engagement not only behaviorally, but also emotionally (enjoying the learning process) and cognitive (delving into the subject matter earnestly).

In contrast, students who are less motivated often show disengagement. They come to school only out of obligation, do not show enthusiasm, and tend to be passive. This is not always because they are incapable, but because the internal drive to learn has not been firmly formed. In this context, student motivation plays an important role in shaping student engagement. Without strong motivation, students find it difficult to demonstrate full engagement in learning. Even interesting learning methods will not be effective if the students themselves do not have the will to learn.

This phenomenon indicates that schools and teachers need to not only focus on delivering material, but also build student learning motivation, for example through relevant learning approaches, providing motivational feedback, and creating a supportive and fun learning environment. Characteristics of people who have high motivation to learn according to (Sardiman, 2019) are: diligent in facing tasks (can be continuous for a long time, never stop before completion), tenacious in facing difficulties, prefer to work independently, can defend opinions, likes to find and solve problems. The results of observations showed that some students were less motivated to learn, tended to ignore assignments when given, or cheated by collaborating with their friends when suddenly asked to collect assignments reported liking them.

The researcher then conducted interviews to support his observations. Students admit that they tend to be less motivated to learn due to a lack of interaction with the school environment, including teachers and other peers. This is one of the factors that builds motivation to learn interpersonal communication. Learning events occur when students actively interact with the teacher-controlled learning environment. An effective teaching and learning process requires the right teaching strategies and methods/techniques. In carrying out teaching and learning activities, balanced attention should be paid to the learning process and its products. The importance of interpersonal communication for teachers includes that teachers can motivate students to be enthusiastic about learning so that they can successfully achieve learning goals. Teachers need to devise the right strategies to motivate students to learn and encourage them to be more active in learning. Because through communication, students can get to know each other and share their difficulties in carrying out the learning process.

Interpersonal communication is communication that is only two people, such as husband and wife, two colleagues, two close friends, teachers-students and so on (Herni et al., 2024). When communication is launched, the communicator knows for sure whether the communication is positive or negative, whether it is successful or not. If he can give the communicator the opportunity to ask as wide as possible. Contextually, interpersonal communication is described as a communication between two individuals or a few individuals, which interact with each other, giving each other interpersonal feedback because of each interaction between one individual and another. However, providing a contextual definition alone is not enough to describe communication with other individuals differently.

One aspect that is often overlooked but has a great influence is interpersonal communication between students. This phenomenon is evident in many schools, where students who actively interact with their peers tend to be more involved in learning activities, both cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. In contrast, students who are introverted, rarely interact, or feel isolated, often show low engagement: they are passive in class, reluctant to ask questions, and less engaged in group work.

For example, in project-based learning or group discussions, students who have good interpersonal communication with their peers find it easier to work together, share ideas, and complete tasks collaboratively. They feel more confident, more valued, and more motivated to participate actively because of the social and emotional support of their peers. This phenomenon shows that interpersonal communication not only builds social relationships, but also becomes an important bridge in fostering students' sense of belonging, confidence, and enthusiasm for learning. Students not only learn from teachers, but also from discussions, questions and answers, and even casual chats with classmates.

Many factors affect learning outcomes, one of which is student engagement. According to (Izdiharunnisa et al., 2023), a student can be said to have student engagement if he has positive behaviors in school activities such as following existing rules and norms, the absence of disruptive behaviors such as truancy or behavior that can invite problems and students are actively involved in the entire academic process. According to (Rice, 2022) Low student engagement will have a bad impact on the quality of students' personalities, besides that it will also be detrimental to teachers, the government and the State because student involvement is part of effective learning interventions. Students who are not engaged will also feel chaotic, have low grades that will have an impact on declining student rankings, student grades are below the school's KKM standards, and tend to be desperate and have the potential to cause dropouts (Azizah, n.d.). Not only that, students will tend to be disruptive in class, pay less attention to teachers and have low academic scores because student engagement is also low (Fredricks et al., 2004).

Likewise, research conducted by (Novita & Aviani, 2023) The results were obtained that there were 33 students (66%) who had low student engagement in learning. Low student engagement is shown by students with less effort in learning, students are bored and do not pay attention to lessons. The results of Willms' research also showed that 25% of students from 43 countries reported having a low sense of school and 20% of students reported having low participation in learning.

The importance of student engagement in learning can optimize the student experience in improving learning outcomes and student achievement at school as well as the school's reputation (Trowler, 2010). Student engagement is also able to direct students to the goals they want to achieve and have a positive influence on student learning outcomes (Amaliana, 2024). According to Reeve in (Ariani & Fikrie, 2019)) students who have high student engagement, the better the learning process. So, it is very important for students to have student engagement so that problems that will interfere with activities and learning outcomes can be reduced and overcome.

To build such an education system, a long-term commitment from interested parties in the world of education is needed. Student engagement is important for every student to have, this emphasis needs to be understood by the school as an education facilitator, parents as the closest figure of the student and the student himself. Student engagement can be an alternative that will be useful in building a system so that the implementation of information in the form of knowledge from teachers and other sources to students can be more successful.

METHOD

This research is planned to be carried out in August 2024 at SMP Negeri 37 Medan. Before the questionnaire was distributed, the researcher had collected data to find out the number of students per class per school year.

Subject data collection has been taken by previous researchers to qualify for the sample according to the research objectives. After that, the researcher provides instructions such as: how to fill in items, and how to fill in biodata. Furthermore, checks and at the same time recording of the scale that has been collected and continued with data processing to determine the validity and reliability of the scale.

Every study, population problem and sample used is one of the important factors that must be considered. (Amin et al., 2023) states that a population is an individual who is usually subject to generalizations from the facts obtained from the research sample. The population in this study is 618 students in the school consisting of 3 classes, the classes taken as research samples are as follows:

Table 1. Classroom as a Research Sample

Class	Total Students	Total
VII	245	
VIII	190	
IX	183	
Total		618

Realizing the breadth of the overall population and the limitations that the researcher has, the selected research subjects are part of the entire population called the sample. The sample was 190 people. The sampling technique that will be used in this study is purposive sampling. According to (Scott, 2016) The purposive sampling technique is a technique for sampling data sources with certain considerations. Anyway, how to take samples with the sample grouping method based on the characteristics determined by the school.

Testing of all hypotheses proposed in this study was carried out using a t-value with a significant level of 0.05. The t-value in the PLS program 3.29 is the Critical Ratio (CR) value. Analysis of CR values and P-values (p-value) from the results of data processing obtained was then compared with the indicated statistical limitations, which were above > 1.96 for CR values and below < 0.05 for P values.

To analyze simultaneously in PLS, the Goodness of Fit Index (GOFI) value criteria were used on the combined model that was already fit. If the GOFI value meets the required criteria, it can be said that the hypothesis is simultaneously accepted ((Imam Ghozali, 2018). If the results of data processing show a value that meets these requirements, then the proposed research hypothesis can be accepted. Discussions on hypothesis testing are carried out in stages according to the order of the hypotheses proposed.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Interpersonal Communication has a positive and significant effect on Learning Motivation. This is shown by a coefficient value of 0.653 with a t-statistical value of 7.889 (> 1.653) and a P value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Thus, the better the interpersonal communication that occurs between teachers and students as well as between students, the higher the learning motivation possessed by students.

Interpersonal Communication has a positive and significant effect on Student Engagement. This result was evidenced by a coefficient value of 0.650, a t-statistical value of 9.077 (> 1.653), and a P value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This means that good interpersonal communication encourages student involvement in the learning process emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally.

Student Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Learning Motivation. With a coefficient of 0.662, a t-statistic of 9.502 (> 1.653), and a P value of 0.000 (< 0.05), it was found that student involvement in learning plays an important role in increasing learning motivation. Students' active involvement allows them to feel more purposeful and motivated to learn.

Student Engagement partially mediates the influence of Interpersonal Communication on Learning Motivation. The direct influence of Interpersonal Communication on Learning Motivation is greater (58.4%) than the indirect influence through Student Engagement (43.1%). This shows that although Student Engagement acts as a mediator, the direct influence of Interpersonal Communication remains dominant.

Overall, this study confirms that interpersonal communication is an important factor in encouraging learning motivation, both directly and indirectly through increased student involvement.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Interpersonal Communication on Learning Motivation

The results of the data analysis showed that the Interpersonal Communication variable had a positive and significant effect on Learning Motivation. This is evidenced by the value of the coefficient (original sample) of 0.653, the t-statistical value of 7.889 (> 1.653), and the value of P values = 0.000 (< 0.05). Based on these results, the first hypothesis was declared accepted. These findings are consistent with the theory of Interpersonal Communication put forward by (Pesiwarissa & Manafe, 2024), which states that interpersonal communication involves verbal and nonverbal exchange of messages between two individuals that can create interpersonal relationships that affect each other. In the context of education, effective interpersonal communication between teachers and students contributes greatly to building a conducive learning atmosphere and encouraging learning motivation. Further(Nurcahyo et al., 2018) In the Self-Determination Theory, it is explained that students' learning motivation can be increased through the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Positive interpersonal communication can reinforce the sense of connectedness and emotional support students need to feel internally motivated. Thus, the results of this study confirm that the better the quality of interpersonal communication that occurs in the learning environment, both between teachers and students and between students, the greater the learning motivation possessed by students.

The Influence of Interpersonal Communication on Student Engagement

The results of the second hypothesis test showed that Interpersonal Communication had a positive and significant effect on Student Engagement. The coefficient value (original sample) was 0.650, the t-statistical value was 9.077 (> 1.653), and P values = 0.000 (< 0.05), became the basis for this hypothesis to be accepted. These findings are in line with the theory of Student Engagement put forward by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris (2004), which states that student engagement includes three main dimensions: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Well-established interpersonal communication plays an important role in increasing this engagement, as students feel cared for, appreciated, and have an active role in the learning process. Moreover (Muniroh, 2015) The Participation-Identification model states that student engagement in learning increases when they feel identified with the school environment, and interpersonal communication is key in forming that sense of belonging and involvement. Thus, it can be concluded that Interpersonal Communication is one of the important factors that encourage active student involvement in learning, both in terms of attendance, participation, attention, and emotional involvement in the learning process.

The Influence of Student Engagement on Learning Motivation

Testing the third hypothesis showed that Student Engagement had a positive and significant effect on Learning Motivation, with a coefficient value (original sample) of 0.662, a t-statistical value of 9.502 (> 1.653), and P values = 0.000 (< 0.05). Thus, the third hypothesis is accepted. These findings reinforce the opinion (Skinner &

Belmont, 1993) that student involvement in learning is the main predictor of learning motivation. Students who are cognitively and emotionally active in learning tend to have high motivation to learn because they feel they have a purpose, get challenged, and derive satisfaction from the learning activity itself. Moreover (Connell & Wellborn, 1991) It also states that student involvement in learning is the result of social context support that encourages the fulfillment of autonomy and competence needs. When students are actively engaged, they are more likely to feel capable and motivated to achieve academic goals. Thus, the higher the students' involvement in learning, the greater the internal drive they have to continue learning consistently and enthusiastically.

The Role of Student Engagement Mediation

Based on path analysis, it is known that Interpersonal Communication has a direct influence on Learning Motivation by 58.4%, while indirect influence through Student Engagement is 43.1%. These results show that direct influence is more dominant, but Student Engagement is still able to partially mediate the relationship. In this context, partial mediation occurs because Interpersonal Communication still has a direct influence on Learning Motivation, although some of its influence is also channeled through Student Engagement. This means that interpersonal communication can increase motivation to learn both directly and through increased student involvement. These findings indicate that in an educational environment, positive interpersonal interaction not only increases direct learning motivation, but also contributes to creating student engagement which ultimately strengthens their motivation to learn. This research strengthens various previous theories related to the role of interpersonal communication and student engagement in increasing learning motivation. The integration of these findings provides a deeper understanding of the causal relationship model between the three variables in the context of education. The results of this study suggest that educators and educational institutions pay attention to the quality of interpersonal communication in the classroom, as this has been proven to have a great influence on student engagement and learning motivation. Effective communication training programs for teachers can also be a strategy to improve the quality of learning.

CONCLUSION

Interpersonal Communication has a positive and significant effect on Learning Motivation. This is shown by a coefficient value of 0.653 with a t-statistical value of 7.889 (> 1.653) and a P value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Interpersonal Communication has a positive and significant effect on Student Engagement. This result was evidenced by a coefficient value of 0.650, a t-statistical value of 9.077 (> 1.653), and a P value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Student Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Learning Motivation. With a coefficient of 0.662, a t-statistic of 9.502 (> 1.653), and a P value of 0.000 (< 0.05), Student Engagement partially mediated the influence of Interpersonal Communication on Learning Motivation. The direct influence of Interpersonal Communication on Learning Motivation is greater (58.4%) than the indirect influence through Student Engagement (43.1%).

SUGGESTION

It is expected to develop effective, empathetic, and open interpersonal communication skills with students. Good communication will create a positive classroom atmosphere and increase students' motivation to learn. There is a need for teacher training and professional development in the field of interpersonal communication and strategies to strengthen student engagement, in order to improve the quality of the overall learning process. Students need to be actively involved in learning activities, both cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally, in order to grow sustainable learning motivation. Students are also expected to build positive communication between peers. It is recommended to develop this study by adding other variables that may affect learning motivation, such as the classroom climate, family roles, or learning strategies. In addition, research can be conducted at different levels of education or regions so that the results are more generalizable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amaliana, D. (2024). The role of student engagement in mediating learning motivation and learning discipline on economic learning outcomes. *Business and Accounting Education Journal*, *5*(1), 90–107.

Amin, N. F., Garancang, S., & Abunawas, K. (2023). Konsep umum populasi dan sampel dalam penelitian. *Pilar*, *14*(1), 15–31.

Ariani, L., & Fikrie, F. (2019). Keterlibatan siswa (student engagement) di sekolah sebagai salah satu upaya peningkatan keberhasilan siswa di sekolah. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional & Call Pape, Banjarmasin*, *13*, 103–110.

Azizah, N. (n.d.). *Pengaruh classroom goal structure, adaptability, dan academic emotion terhadap school engagement saat pembelajaran jarak jauh pada siswa SMA JADETABEK*. Fakultas Psikologi UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Connell, J. P., & Wellborn, J. G. (1991). *Competence, autonomy, and relatedness: A motivational analysis of self-system processes.*

dalam Sardiman, M. D. (2012). Interaksi dan Motivasi Belajar Mengajar. *Bandung. Rajawali Pers*.

Emda, A. (2018). Kedudukan motivasi belajar siswa dalam pembelajaran. *Lantanida Journal*, *5*(2), 172–182.

Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, *74*(1), 59–109.

Herni, O. A., Sari, S., & Yanto, Y. (2024). Komunikasi interpersonal dalam menciptakan keluarga sakinah. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Dehasen (MUDE)*, *3*(1), 1–16.

Imam Ghozali. (2018). *Aplikasi Analisis Multivariate dengan Program IBM SPSS 25*. Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.

Izdiharunnisa, I., Hasanuddin, H., & Lubis, S. (2023). Pengaruh Self Regulated Learning Religiusitas Terhadap Student Engagement Pada Siswa Madrasah Aliyah Swasta Muallimin Univa Medan. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *12*(03).

Laili, S. (2022). *Hubungan Antara Self Efficacy Dan Dukungan Guru Dengan Keterlibatan Belajar Pada Siswa Smp*. UIN RADEN INTAN LAMPUNG.

Muniroh, A. (2015). *Academic Engagement; Penerapan Model Problem-Based Learning di Madrasah: Penerapan Model Problem-Based Learning di Madrasah*. LKIS Pelangi Aksara.

Nitbani, S. (2022). Motivasi Belajar Dalam Pembelajaran Konstruktivistik (Sebuah Kajian Teoretik Berdasarkan Teori Ekspektansi Vroom). *Jurnal Lazuardi*, *5*(2), 1–12.

Novita, O. H., & Aviani, Y. I. (2023). Gambaran Student Engagement pada siswa SMA di Kota Bukittinggi. *Edu Sociata: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi*, *6*(2), 969–974.

Nurcahyo, D., Widiyanti, W., & Wahono, W. (2018). Pengaruh Self–Discipline Dan Pengetahuan Teori Secara Langsung dan melalui Hasil Belajar Praktikum Pemesinan terhadap Kesiapan Memasuki Dunia Kerja Siswa SMK. *Teknologi Dan Kejuruan: Jurnal Teknologi, Kejuruan, Dan Pengajarannya*, *41*(1), 25–36.

Pesiwarissa, B. I. J., & Manafe, L. A. (2024). Komunikasi Interpersonal Atasan Dan Bawahan Dalam Membangun Efektivitas Kerja Pegawai. *Economics and Digital Business Review*, *5*(2), 543–555.

Sardiman, A. M. (2019). *Interaksi dan motivasi belajar mengajar*.

Sari, R. S., & Suhaili, N. Y. (2020). Bakat Terhadap Motivasi Belajar Siswa Dalam Proses Belajar Dan Pembelajaran. *Ensiklopedia of Journal*, *3*(1), 140–147.

Skinner, E. A., & Belmont, M. J. (1993). Motivation in the classroom: Reciprocal effects of teacher behavior and student engagement across the school year. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *85*(4), 571.

Sugiyono. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.

Trowler, V. (2010). Student engagement literature review. *The Higher Education Academy*, *11*(1), 1–15.