

The Role of Teachers in Fostering Children's Motivation for Learning in the New Normal Era Through Affective Learning

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Abstract

This study aims to describe teachers' efforts in fostering children's learning motivation in the new normal era through affective learning for early childhood. Teachers are required to master the teaching materials that will be taught to children by providing learning enthusiasm through affective learning in the hope that children can instill interest, attitudes, self-concepts, and values. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method where the study examines the object naturally according to the situation in the field and describes it in words. The research was conducted at Islamic Kindergarten in Cigombong, Bogor. The subjects of this study were the headmaster and teachers. The findings of this study are the efforts of teachers to increase children's learning motivation through affective learning in the new normal era, including instilling attitudes and having good personalities with the aim of ensuring that the attitudes built in children are following expectations, thus encouraging the formation of children's attitudes from an early age.

Keywords: Teacher Role, Learning Motivation, Affective Learning

INTRODUCTION

Three years have passed since the first case of Covid-19 was discovered in Wuhan Province, China, causing a global uproar. Hundreds of countries, including Indonesia, have been exposed to this virus (Junaedi & Salistia, 2020; Swelum et al., 2020). Due to the rapid spread of the virus and its resulting casualties, the Indonesian government immediately took steps to curb its spread. These measures included social distancing, physical distancing, and urging people to stay at home and carry out all activities from home. Some cities implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions, severely limiting their residents' activities (Fatwa, 2020). As a result, all activities came to a halt, and it can be said that the impact of this coronavirus has affected several sectors ranging from the economy, trade, tourism, banking, to the education sector, which has also felt the impact of the virus's spread (Smeru et al., 2021).

COVID-19 has caused an extraordinary disruption to learning in Indonesia. Almost all parents express concerns about learning loss during the pandemic (Cahaya et al., 2022; Pendency et al., 2021). Even before the pandemic arrived, Indonesia faced serious learning challenges as 70 percent of 15-year-old students could not achieve minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics (World Bank, 2021). Teachers, students, and parents face many challenges in distance learning. Most distance learning is conducted through WhatsApp, limiting direct interaction between teachers and students.

The change in behavior to maintain normal activities or adapt to the new normal, coupled with the implementation of health protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. With the new normal, society can carry out activities as usual while implementing health protocols established by the government to reduce the spread of COVID-19 (Muhamad Khair et al., 2021; Raghavan et al., 2021). Therefore, the decision to reopen schools is left to the local government, and most schools have not yet resumed face-to-face learning.

In the new normal era, face-to-face learning activities, including face-to-face learning processes, are allowed in schools. Face-to-face learning processes are allowed at all levels of education, especially early childhood education (Zagouras et al., 2022). Early childhood is a golden age that requires more special and direct services compared to other levels of education (Alabdulhadi, 2019; Suhendro, 2020). Early Childhood Education is an

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effort given by adults to children from birth to 6 years old with various stimuli to help children's growth and development (Kohlberg, 1968; Rohita, 2020). Children age 2 to 6 years old begin to recognize their environment, including family, playgroups, similar educational institutions, and school environments.

In the new normal era, the role of teachers is very important in the education sector. The role of a teacher is to provide guidance, which means educators guide children with the abilities, interests, talents, and abilities that they already have (Illahi, 2020). In Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number Year 2005 Article 1 (1) concerning Teachers and Lecturers, it is stated that teachers are professional educators whose main duties are educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education, basic education, and secondary education through the formal education system (Amelia et al., 2022). Teachers will serve as an example for students, providing enjoyable, creative, interesting, friendly, and flexible learning (Nofrika & Suryana, 2022). Thus, teachers must possess and have professional, personality, pedagogical, and social community competencies.

In the context of educational development in the New Normal era, the role of teachers becomes increasingly important in fostering motivation and learning enthusiasm in early childhood. Early childhood is a critical phase in character and personality formation, where important foundations for lifelong learning are laid (Rohmah et al., 2023; Warsita, 2008). Amid the global changes faced, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers must be able to adapt effective and relevant learning strategies to meet the needs of children in the New Normal era.

One approach that has proven effective in early childhood learning is the affective approach. This approach emphasizes the importance of building positive emotional relationships between teachers and students and paying attention to psychological and socio-emotional aspects in the learning process (Heriyansyah, 2018; Saumantri, 2022; Zabel et al., 1991). By strengthening emotional engagement and student learning motivation, the affective approach has great potential to improve learning outcomes and personal development in early childhood.

In this article, the researcher will explore the important role of teachers in implementing affective learning to foster motivation and learning enthusiasm in early childhood in the New Normal era. This article will discuss key concepts in the affective approach, effective implementation strategies, and its positive impact on early childhood learning. Through a deep understanding of the teacher's role in this context, it is hoped that valuable insights will be provided for educational practitioners to optimize the potential of early childhood in facing the evolving challenges of the New Normal era."

METHOD

The research was conducted at Islamic Kindergarten at Cigombong, Bogor. The Kindergarten has a total of 40 children consisting of groups A and B. Group A itself consists of 20 children, and group B consists of 20 children. The learning model used in the school is the classical model. Facilities available at The Kindergarten include 3 classrooms, the principal's and teachers' office, a prayer room, a canteen, a kitchen, and a playground equipped with outdoor games. This research was conducted for several months in 2022. This study used a qualitative research method (Prasanti, 2018). This type of research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach as a factual method of studying the object. Descriptive analysis aims to systematically create factual and accurate descriptions of facts, images, or paintings, as well as the nature and relationships between investigated phenomena (Fadli, 2021). Therefore, this study aims to explore, describe, and describe the current phenomenon regarding the Role of Teachers in Fostering Early Childhood Learning Enthusiasm in the New Normal Era through Affective Learning.

This research aims to understand how the Role of Teachers Fosters Early Childhood Learning Enthusiasm in the New Normal Era through Affective Learning. Several data collection techniques were used in this study, including: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation Observation is the collection of data that means direct data from the field. Activities carried out by researchers are observation, interviews, and documentation Observation in this study was conducted at The Kindergarten, this research aims to obtain,

collect, and inform data that researchers will need in research on the Role of Teachers in Fostering Early Childhood Learning Enthusiasm in the New Normal Era.

Data collection techniques have individual characteristics compared to other techniques. Interview The use of interview methods in this study is to find out how the development of learning at The Kindergarten in developing affective learning in the new normal era. Interviews conducted by researchers were in the form of question and answer using interview guidelines and information from the principal and classroom teachers to get an overview of fostering early childhood learning enthusiasm in the new normal era through affective learning. Researchers asked several questions to informants. The type of interview used in this study is face-to-face, WhatsApp, and via telephone. Documentation studies help researchers get an accurate explanation of the results of observations and interviews related to problems, objectives, functions, and others. In this study, researchers used documentation in the form of interview sheets, pictures, and things related to fostering early childhood learning enthusiasm in the new normal era through affective learning (Mekarisce, 2020). This research requires data analysis as a stage of compiling data results that have been collected through interviews, observations, and documentation so that data is easily understood and has a value of honesty (Rijali, 2019). There are several activities in data analysis including:

Data reduction is the process of selection, focusing on simplification, transformation, and abstraction of raw data that emerges in research results. Summarized data includes interview results from the principal and teachers, observation of learning, and documentation in the form of photos and archives related to research.

After the data is reduced, the next step is to display the data, which is a collection of information arranged to provide possibilities related to conclusions and actions. So that the data will be organized, arranged in patterns, and easy to understand. In this step, the researcher presents and juxtaposes data collection results from observation, interviews, and documentation techniques that have become a sentence that the researcher easily understands.

Conclusion is the meaning of data that has been displayed. This means the interpretation is made based on the researcher's understanding. This conclusion is not the final conclusion, but verification of field findings is needed. Thus, to obtain conclusions, other data needs to be sought. This research makes meaning from the presentation of data in the form of narratives so that conclusions are obtained from the role of teachers in fostering early childhood learning enthusiasm in the new normal era through affective learning.

RESULTS

The Role of Teachers in Providing Motivation in the New Normal Era

The role of teachers in this study involves habitually providing motivation to children to ensure they receive encouragement during learning activities. Typically, teachers motivate children to keep them enthusiastic and engaged during learning sessions. The information was obtained based on interviews with teachers, as expressed by H and Y:

"Fostering enthusiasm for learning in children by providing motivation, creating a pleasant atmosphere so that children do not feel bored during learning." [H/CW 4]

"Fostering children's enthusiasm for learning by providing motivation and the role of parents in ensuring that children remain enthusiastic because ... by fostering children's enthusiasm for learning, they will be enthusiastic about new things." [Y/CW 3]

Moreover, some teachers believe motivation or encouragement can prevent children from feeling bored during learning activities. However, it is not only about that; in this new normal era, children need to adapt to new activities again, requiring a change in mindset. As expressed by respondent Y, it is not just about providing motivation for learning but also about changing the mindset of children. Hence, children will be enthusiastic about learning activities.

The Role of Teachers in Fostering Children's Motivation for Learning in the New Normal Era Through Affective Learning

"Being accustomed to staying at home and learning without supervision has become a habit during the pandemic, so in this new normal era, it is necessary to provide motivation and guidance to children by changing their mindset that learning is enjoyable by taking step-by-step approaches." [Y/CW 1]

However, some teachers believe that fostering enthusiasm for learning in this new normal era requires interesting teaching methods and conducting icebreakers before learning activities. This ensures that children feel enthusiastic and engaged during learning.

"The way to foster enthusiasm for learning in the new normal era is to provide motivation and choose enjoyable teaching methods so that children do not feel bored." [R/CW 2]

"Fostering enthusiasm for learning in the new normal era can be done by selecting engaging teaching methods, praising students, and conducting icebreakers before learning activities." [A/CW 5]

The Role of Teachers in Implementing Affective Learning Strategies

Implementing affective learning strategies for early childhood children is one effort to instill positive attitudes in children from an early age. Teachers typically design affective learning programs tailored for early childhood children to facilitate their understanding and application. The information was obtained through interviews with educators, as expressed by R:

"The strategy in implementing affective learning includes activities such as drawing or coloring, then displaying the results in front of the class, storytelling, playing outside the classroom, and many more. Not only that, but it also involves designing and implementing learning programs effectively for children." [R/CW 2]

Moreover, some teachers believe that starting from the smallest things is essential in implementing affective learning strategies for children. For example, children are asked to engage in simple activities such as helping classmates, disposing of trash properly, and using kind words. This is exemplified by educators Y and A, who encourage children to speak kindly and perform good deeds.

"Affective learning strategies for early childhood education include having children step forward in class, with one child disposing of trash properly while another places trash in a flowerpot. This allows the teacher to explain to students which behavior is commendable." [Y/CW 3]

"Teaching children good speech, for instance, through singing and clapping along with Islamic chants, and avoiding using harsh words in front of children because they easily mimic new behaviors. Additionally, teaching children to respect others by showing appreciation to their peers helps them understand the importance of valuing others." [A/CW 5]

Various methods are employed in implementing affective learning strategies for early childhood children. Several educators interviewed explain that these strategies start from the smallest and easiest tasks. However, it is crucial to ensure that affective learning is engaging and enjoyable for children, allowing them to easily absorb the lessons. As articulated by H and Y:

"In implementing affective learning for early childhood children, start from the smallest things, such as teachers exemplifying courteous behavior, refraining from using vulgar language, honesty, etc. Additionally, videos of prophet stories will also be shown, and moral lessons will be discussed afterward." [H/CW 4]

"To make it enjoyable and engaging for children, consider activities like showing educational films promoting mutual assistance among peers or storytelling about current events, arranging LEGO sets according to their preferences, and more. Afterward, teachers should summarize the lessons for the children." [Y/CW 1]

Models Used in Affective Learning for Early Childhood Children

Teachers can employ various models of affective learning for early childhood children to instill values, attitudes, interests, character, feelings, appreciation, adjustment, and individual behavior. The aim is to help children distinguish between right and wrong and apply these principles. In implementing affective learning, teachers must select the appropriate model to practice directly or indirectly.

According to the explanations provided by several educators interviewed, one commonly used model for affective learning is the consideration model. As expressed by Y, A, R, Y, and H:

"There are various models in the realm of affective learning, such as the consideration model, cognitive development, and value clarification. Although all models are important for children, the consideration model is often emphasized." [Y/CW 1]

"There are three affective learning models: consideration, cognitive, and value clarification. While all models are essential, the consideration model is frequently utilized." [A/CW 5]

"The commonly used models for affective learning include consideration, but sometimes we also use cognitive development models." [R/CW 2]

"Here, the frequently used model for affective learning is usually consideration model." [Y/CW 3]

"Typically, the consideration model is used, although sometimes we also employ cognitive and value clarification models." [H/CW 4]

DISCUSSION

Providing Motivation in the New Normal Era

Becoming a preschool teacher requires high resilience and patience to face it all. Fostering a spirit of learning involves more than just providing motivation; one aspect is changing the mindset of children. By guiding children to change their mindset to find learning enjoyable. According to Andrew, the role of teachers in education is crucial in instilling a passion for learning in children, providing them with education and guidance in their learning activities. Each child has different characteristics and attitudes, so it is necessary to provide engaging teaching methods, praise students, and conduct icebreakers before learning activities begin.

Characteristics of affective learning in motivating young children (Teraoka et al., 2021):

Attitude: A child's attitude toward something they like or enjoy reflects their comfort and enjoyment with that thing or condition. Therefore, fostering a child's enthusiasm for learning by providing motivation such as using engaging methods, conducting icebreakers before learning activities, and others, will guide the child to engage in positive or negative actions.

Interest: Having an interest will become a strong source of motivation for children to learn. Building interest in young children requires a high level of intensity through various activities that can enhance children's interests. Therefore, young children should not be judged solely based on learning achievement but rather on how to motivate and develop children's learning interests so that their potential can develop optimally.

Appreciation: It involves giving rewards. Therefore, teachers can motivate children by giving rewards.

Adjustment: It can have a lasting and cumulative effect, so adapting to school. Therefore, children can be motivated to make this adjustment by socializing with people in the school environment.

Value: It needs to be understood that in motivating children to learn, it is not only related to attitude, interest, appreciation, and adjustment, but values are also important. Value is ideal; it is not a concrete object, it exists in an empty room, it is not just a fact that proves empirically true or false, but it is about the desired and undesired appreciation. Therefore, values are not the main reference in acting in the field of attitude but are more oriented towards moral considerations and behavior because every child has their own values.

According to Kyllonen et al (2014), creating an enjoyable learning atmosphere can be developed through active and creative classroom atmospheres including religious, self-control, personality, intelligence, and other necessary skills. Therefore, the role of teachers in affective learning is to act as an evaluator by providing motivation to children so that they are more enthusiastic about their learning. Thus, the learning motivation provided by teachers allows children to achieve achievement in learning and acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values.

Implementing Affective Learning Strategies

The Role of Teachers in Cultivating Learning Enthusiasm among Early Childhood Children in the New Normal Era through Affective Learning is to apply affective learning strategies in early childhood education (ECE), including designing and implementing affective learning programs effectively for children. Additionally, through methods such as storytelling, showcasing drawings in front of the class, storytelling, and engaging in both indoor and outdoor play, teachers encourage students to express their opinions on their own and their peers' work, while other students can provide feedback to their peers (Yan et al., 2023).



Gambar 4.1. Menayangkan film edukasi.

Figure 4.1. Screening of Educational Films This image was obtained during an interview with one of the informants. The image above illustrates that affective learning strategies can be implemented by screening educational films such as stories of prophets. By showing educational films, positive values such as honesty, empathy, cooperation, and others can be conveyed. As explained by several informants interviewed by the researcher, teachers exemplify polite behavior, honesty, etc., and may also show videos of stories of prophets. After watching the video, the teacher explains what lessons should be learned from the stories.



Gambar 4.2. Bermain lego

Figure 4.2. Playing with Lego Additionally, some informants suggest that affective learning strategies can be implemented through simple activities such as playing both indoors and outdoors. Like the image obtained during an interview with one of the informants. The image above demonstrates that affective learning strategies can be implemented by providing children with Lego materials. Children are asked to build Lego according to their wishes, which helps them develop problem-solving skills and patience. Therefore, in developing affective learning in young children, students are taught to consider issues from various perspectives and are encouraged to formulate their own actions.

Characteristics of affective learning in providing affective learning strategies for young children:

Attitude: It is a reaction or response that elicits behavior. Each child has different attitudes, as exemplified by showing educational films. After watching the educational film, the child's attitude can be observed, whether happy or sad, etc.

Interest: In the applied learning strategy, children are made to feel happy, reflecting the child's interest. For example, if a child chooses an interest in reading or listening to stories, they will listen to stories rather than read them. Therefore, attitudes towards an object are always accompanied by certain feelings, whether positive or negative.

Appreciation: It involves giving recognition or assessment. Appreciation can be shown in various ways, such as showcasing children's work in front of the class. Children respond by giving praise. Therefore, appreciation is not only needed by adults but also by children for their actions and creations to boost their creativity. However, appreciation should not be given arbitrarily as it may negatively impact their growth and development.

Adjustment: In this adjustment, children can solve their problems independently, such as playing with Lego. By playing with Lego, children create anything they see in their lives. Therefore, children develop new ideas, solve problems, and develop patience.

Value: From various activities conducted with children, teachers guide children by making more mature choices according to their own considerations. Hence, teachers do not judge the rightness or wrongness of children's choices.

Therefore, the role of teachers applied in affective learning strategies is that of a facilitator, where teachers must master the content or material and the teaching strategies to be delivered to children (Curran & Standage, 2017). Children will be enthusiastic about the learning imparted by teachers and can determine the outcomes children achieve.

Models Used in Affective Learning

The role of teachers in fostering learning enthusiasm among early childhood children in the new normal era through affective learning involves the model used in affective learning for young children. Teachers usually choose a learning model beforehand when selecting the learning to be delivered (Wilson & Cole, 1991). This is done to ensure that the material delivery is well-structured. The affective learning model used is the consideration model, where consideration is a learning model aimed at making students become caring individuals towards others and their surroundings.

There are three models of affective learning in early childhood, namely: 1) Consideration Model; 2) Cognitive Development Model; and 3) Value Clarification Technique (McCoach et al., 2013). Of all the affective learning models, only the consideration model is used. The application of the consideration model is based on the assumption that teachers must be role models in the classroom, so teachers must create camaraderie, respect, tolerance, empathy, and cooperation so that students can capture the values that can be taken from daily life.

Characteristics of affective learning in the consideration model realm include attitudes, interests, values, morals, and self-concepts.

Attitude: Every individual has their unique attitude. Attitude is a tendency to process something, whether it be an individual, values, events, or so on. Thus, when associated with the consideration model, a child will have a positive attitude towards school if there are kind-hearted teachers, playmates, and spacious schools full of play equipment.

Interest: It is a driving factor in carrying out efforts or activities that stimulate a feeling of pleasure in individuals. An example of the consideration model in instilling interest is if a child chooses an interest in reading or listening to stories, they will choose to listen to stories rather than read them.

Appreciation: It involves consideration or judgment about the importance or value of something. In the consideration model, appreciation can be seen in students' respect for teachers and classmates, study time, etc. For example, by praising when a child shows their work.

Adjustment: An affective aspect that influences student behavior according to the values embedded in them. The consideration model in instilling adjustment, for example, a child can solve problems by playing with Lego.

Value: It is a belief and a guideline that directs a person's changes and decision-making. The consideration model in values is similar to other affective learning models. Values are an important concept that refers to the desired end state. Thus, in the context of teaching and learning concepts, children can distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad.

The consideration learning model, like other learning models, has its advantages and disadvantages, including: Exposing students to real situations so that students can actively engage; Training students to think and feel objectively and fairly; Can improve interpersonal relationship readiness (Rahman, 2019; Thorpe et al., 2011). This model can train students to analyze situations. Students who are accustomed to using consideration learning can understand the feelings of others without asking them first, so participants can position themselves well; Students are trained to distinguish between good and bad; Students are accustomed to behaving following norms; and Students are accustomed to sharing.

Therefore, the role of teachers applied in this learning model is that of a demonstrator, where teachers must master the material or model to be delivered to children. Thus, if this model is implemented seriously, then well-being can be achieved.

Supporting Factors in Enhancing Affective Learning Abilities

It is important to note that in developing affective skills in the new normal era, there must be support from both teachers and parents. In Government Regulation No. 74 of 2008 concerning teachers, Article 1 paragraph 1 states that teachers are professional educators with the main tasks of teaching, guiding, educating, assessing, training, and evaluating students. This means that a teacher's role goes beyond transferring and developing knowledge alone; they are also responsible for optimising specific aspects to support students' learning success (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; McGee, 2012). Teachers must be able to change the learning system and learning objectives with prepared concepts that previously emphasized developmental aspects but now emphasize the affective learning domain.

Therefore, it is crucial for teachers and parents to cultivate good behavior and set exemplary examples, so that children will know what is right and what is wrong (Arends & Kilcher, 2010; Reigeluth, 2012). Additionally, facilities and infrastructure are supportive factors in affective learning. Facilitating facilities and infrastructure will facilitate the development of affective learning in early childhood.

Barriers to Enhancing Affective Learning Abilities

One of the barriers to improving affective learning abilities in the new normal era is the lack of student response in developing affective learning, making it difficult to directly evaluate the success of attitude formation, which requires a long time.

Additionally, environmental factors can influence the development of a person's attitude due to habitual behaviors. Therefore, it is not surprising that each child has different attitudes (Albarracin & Johnson, 2019). There are times when teachers and parents need to instill good habits in front of children, as children easily imitate what they see (Comber & Thieme, 2013). Hence, the inhibiting factors in affective roles include limited facilities and infrastructure, student responses, as well as the influence of the environment and parents that are less supportive in learning.

CONCLUSION

The Role of Teachers in Cultivating Motivation and Learning Enthusiasm in Early Childhood Education in the New Normal Era Through Affective Learning can be summarized as follows: The role of the teacher as an evaluator is crucial, where they provide motivation for children to stay enthusiastic in their learning endeavors, change children's mindsets, and utilize engaging and enjoyable teaching methods. Furthermore, the teacher's role as a demonstrator is highlighted, particularly in the application of affective learning models used at The Kindergarten. Here, the teacher functions as a demonstrator by implementing the consideration model of

learning because this model emphasizes strategies that can shape personalities. Moreover, the consideration model is linked to affective characteristics to facilitate affective learning for young children. On the other hand, the teacher's role as a facilitator is essential. Children will feel happy in their learning experiences with the provision of facilities. For instance, this can be implemented by allowing children to play with LEGO to solve problems and cultivate patience, screening educational films such as stories of prophets, and other similar activities.

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