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The influence of distance traveled on student learning motivation: education in rural areas

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Abstrak

Jarak merupakan penghalang dalam mengakses pendidikan. Di beberapa daerah pedesaan, jarak menjadi hambatan untuk mengakses pendidikan. Melalui penelitian mini yang dilakukan oleh peneliti, peneliti menunjukkan pengaruh jarak terhadap motivasi belajar siswa. Metode kuantitatif digunakan dengan analisis statistik deskriptif dan analisis Kruskal Wallis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi belajar tidak terhambat oleh jarak yang ditempuh siswa untuk menjalankan pendidikannya. Temuan ini membuka peluang untuk penelitian lebih lanjut yang lebih mendalam mengenai motif siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Motivasi, Jarak Tempuh, Pendidikan Daerah Pedesaan*

Abstract

Distance is an obstacle in gaining access to education. There are many cases in several rural areas where distance is a barrier to access to education. Through mini research conducted by researchers, researchers show the effect of distance on student learning motivation. At the completion stage of this research, quantitative methods were used with descriptive statistical analysis and analysis using Kruskal Wallis. The results of this research indicate that motivation to learn is not hampered by the distance students travel to carry out their education. The findings of this research are an opening for further, more in-depth research on student motives.

Keywords: *Motivation, Distance Traveled, Rural Area Education*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human need that plays a vital role in enhancing spirituality(Vaqqosovich 2023), transforming behavior, lifestyle, and perspectives on life for the better(Ahmed 2023). Education begins at birth and continues to develop alongside the course of human life. Unlike other living beings, humans possess extraordinary potential to develop themselves, society, the nation, and the state through education. In this regard, learning becomes a lifelong process, serving a central role in determining an individual's success, especially in the modern era, which is fraught with challenges and opportunities. Through learning, individuals strive to acquire knowledge, skills, and values that positively influence their behavior.

Learning is not merely an activity but an effort that requires motivation, both from within the individual and from their surrounding environment(Ayu 2017). Learning motivation can arise from internal factors, such as the desire for self-improvement, curiosity, and ambition to achieve goals(Zajda 2018; Zajda and Zajda

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2021). Furthermore, external factors also play a significant role, including family support, a conducive learning environment, and the availability of educational facilities. When this motivation is strong, individuals are more focused, persistent, and productive in their learning process. However, despite the numerous factors that can enhance learning motivation, there are also significant obstacles that may arise. One of the critical challenges is the distance between students' residences and educational institutions (Nolen, Horn, and Ward 2015).

In remote areas, distance becomes a primary barrier for students in accessing education. Geographical conditions, inadequate infrastructure, and long travel times can directly impact students' motivation to learn. Exhausting journeys can drain energy and reduce their concentration while studying at campus. This issue is particularly critical in rural areas where access to quality education remains a major challenge. Thus, understanding the influence of distance on learning motivation is a relevant topic for research.

Research on the relationship between students' commuting distance to campus and their learning motivation aims to determine the extent to which geographical factors influence students' enthusiasm for learning. With the findings from this research, educational institutions are expected to identify the challenges faced by students, especially those residing in remote areas, and formulate more inclusive policies. This research also seeks to provide recommendations for stakeholders to address obstacles caused by distance, thereby minimizing educational disparities.
The results of this research are expected not only to provide theoretical contributions but also to serve as a basis for decision-making in creating equitable and accessible educational programs for all. Consequently, every student, regardless of their geographical location, would have an equal opportunity to maximize their potential and receive quality education. Ultimately, these efforts are anticipated to reduce educational inequalities and support the development of competent and highly competitive human resources in the future.

METHOD

This research method uses quantitative research. The quantitative research used aims to answer the research problem formulation, namely; Does travel distance have an influence on student learning motivation? Thus, the sample in this study were students who were willing to take into account the study motivation and distance traveled to campus. The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire totaling 43 items. This questionnaire was adopted from previous researchers, where out of forty-three there were eight negative statements. This questionnaire uses four Likert scales, namely; (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) agree; (4) strongly agree. This research was analyzed using descriptive analysis and Kruskal Wallis analysis. Descriptive analysis aims to determine the mean, frequency and distance categories as well as student learning motivation. Researchers can categorize student distance traveled in the following table;

Table 1 Category of distance traveled by students

No	Category	Distance Range	Kilometers

1	Short distance	1 - 40,7	km
2	Medium distance	40,8 – 80,4	km
3	Long distance	80,5 – 120,2	km

Table one shows that researchers can categorize students' distance traveled into three, namely; category one is short distance, category two is medium distance, category three is long distance. Furthermore, in the category of student learning motivation, researchers categorized it into the following;

Table 2 Score categories for student learning motivation results

No	Category	Score
1	Low	43 – 85
2	Moderate	86 – 128
3	High	129 - 172

Table two is a categorization of the cumulative score results obtained by the sample. Researchers can categorize scores into three, namely low learning motivation, moderate learning motivation, and high learning motivation. The Kruskal Wallis analysis was aimed at finding out the relationship between distance and learning motivation. Researchers use Kruskal Wallis analysis because the data used for the independent variables is ordinal data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study discuss the research findings in detail. First, the researcher will present a descriptive analysis of the research results, namely as follows;

Table 3 Results of descriptive analysis of student distance traveled

No	Category	Score	frequency	%
1	Short distance	43 – 85	0	0,00%
2	Medium distance	86 – 128	16	57,14%
3	Long distance	129 - 172	12	42,86%

Table three shows that short distance has a range between 1 and 40.7 km, medium distance has a range of 40.8 to 80.4 km, and the third category is 80.5 to 120.2 km. These three categories have a percentage of 67.86%, 21.43% and 10.71%, respectively. Furthermore, in the category of student learning motivation, researchers categorized it into the following;

Table 4 Results of analysis of student learning motivation categories

No	Category	Score	frequency	%
1	Low	43 – 85	0	0,00%
2	Moderate	86 – 128	16	57,14%
3	High	129 - 172	12	42,86%

Table 5 Kruskal-Wallis Analysis Results

Test Statistics	Value
Chi-Square (X^2)	0,027
Degrees of Freedom (df)	2
Asymptotic Significance (Asymp. Sig.)	0,986

Instinct is an innate biological force that influences the body to act in specific ways under appropriate circumstances(Kubie 1956; Varela 2003). As a genetically inherited mechanism, instinct is considered to play a crucial role in shaping human thoughts and behaviors. According to this theory, all human thoughts and actions are not the result of rational processes or consciousness but are entirely driven by instincts embedded from birth. In other words, humans do not have full control over these inherent impulses because there is a force within them that unconsciously determines their attitudes and actions. Consequently, everything humans do, whether in thought or behavior, is believed to be an automatic response to instinctive drives.

This perspective gives rise to the understanding that humans act based on natural impulses without rational intervention(Jolls, Sunstein, and Thaler 1997). Instinct serves as the primary motor driving all human activities, from simple actions to more complex decisions. For proponents of this theory, the existence of instincts explains various universal behavior patterns among humans, even if they cannot always be logically or rationally explained. However, this theory also raises significant questions about the extent to which humans can rely on their rationality when faced with various life situations.

In the context of research, this theory provides an important foundation for understanding the motives behind human behavior. A mini-study conducted sought to relate the role of instincts to aspects of student learning motivation. This study involved 28 samples as research subjects to identify the relationship between the distance traveled to educational institutions and learning motivation. Initial findings showed no significant relationship between travel distance and students' motivation levels. However, researchers noted that these results still require further verification.

The research procedures were conducted carefully to ensure the validity of the data obtained. Researchers used systematic methods in collecting and analyzing data, although the small sample size was one of the study's limitations. During the process, various other variables that might influence learning motivation were also considered, including the learning environment, family support, and educational facilities. The findings serve as initial insights that are quite intriguing, although definitive conclusions cannot yet be drawn.

The discovery that travel distance has no significant effect on learning motivation raises new questions about other potentially more influential factors. Could there be psychological or social variables

that play a more dominant role in shaping student motivation? Or does inherent instinct have a greater impact on motivation compared to external factors like distance? These questions form the basis for further, more in-depth research.

The results of this study serve as a critical reflection for researchers. Given the limited sample size, researchers acknowledge that generalizing the findings cannot be done broadly. Further studies with larger sample sizes and more comprehensive approaches are needed to understand the complex relationship between external and internal factors influencing learning motivation. In this regard, subsequent research must also integrate psychological and sociological approaches to gain a more complete picture.

This study also makes an important contribution to the academic discussion on the role of instinct in human life. If it is true that instinct has a dominant influence on behavior and motivation, these findings could form the basis for developing more effective educational theories and interventions. Education could be designed by considering humans' natural drive to learn, making teaching strategies more aligned with basic human needs.

However, it should also be noted that this perspective sparks debate. Some researchers argue that human behavior is not solely driven by instincts but is also influenced by learning processes, experiences, and the environment. In this context, learning motivation may be more affected by social interactions and emotional support than by geographical distance. Therefore, a holistic approach is needed to understand motivation more deeply.

As a next step, researchers plan to expand this study by involving more subjects and variables. Longitudinal studies will also be a relevant option to observe changes in student motivation over time. This way, the relationship between external factors such as travel distance and internal factors such as instincts can be explored more accurately. This study also opens up opportunities to explore the relationship between instinct and motivation in various other contexts, such as the workplace, interpersonal relationships, or personal development. If instinct indeed serves as a major force influencing motivation, its application could extend to various aspects of human life. This would have a significant impact on how we understand human behavior and design more effective interventions.

Thus, the results of this study represent an important first step in understanding the complexity of the relationship between instinct, motivation, and human behavior. The researchers hope these findings will serve as material for discussion and inspiration for further studies. Ultimately, more in-depth and comprehensive research is expected to provide tangible contributions in answering fundamental questions about human nature and the drives that influence their behavior.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions obtained from the mini research show that travel distance has no influence on student learning motivation. This is shown by the value of X2(df=2) being 0.027 with an Asymp.sig value of 0.986. This makes researchers interested in exploring the motives of student learning motivation.

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