

TEACHER'S PERCEPTION OF BRAIN GYM EXERCISES TO BUILD STUDENTS LEARNING MOTIVATION

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ABSTRACT

Motivation is a crucial factor that influences student achievement. Therefore, it is important to understand teachers' perceptions regarding the phenomenon of decreasing student learning motivation. This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions regarding the use of Brain Gym as an effort to increase student learning motivation and to determine the impact of using this technique on student concentration in learning. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design that focuses on describing teachers' views regarding the effectiveness of Brain Gym in building learning motivation. To collect data, researchers conducted interviews with instruments consisting of questions, documentation sheets, and other supporting sources. In this study, researchers used convenience sampling techniques, namely selecting samples based on ease of access to participants. The results showed that the majority of teachers agreed that the use of Brain Gym can increase student learning motivation. Thus, Brain Gym can be used as an alternative in fun and interesting learning. Although this study has limitations related to time and place, the conclusion that can be drawn is that Brain Gym has a positive impact on student learning motivation and also encourages teacher creativity in the learning process.

Keywords: Student Learning Motivation, Teacher Perception, Brain Gymnastics

INTRODUCTION

Etymologically, the word "perception" comes from Latin which means to receive or take. According to Alex Sobur, perception is an experience of an object or event obtained through the process of drawing conclusions and giving meaning to the information or messages received (Sobur, 2013). The term perception is often used to describe how someone feels or interprets an object or event that has been experienced. Some factors that influence a person's perception include internal factors such as feelings, attitudes, individual characteristics, attention, learning processes, interests, and motivation, as well as external factors such as family background, information obtained, repetition of movements, and new things that feel familiar (Fitri Jayanti, 2018). Therefore, teacher perception is the process of how teachers organize, select, and interpret existing information and experiences, then provide meaning to form a picture of the ongoing activities. Huda also argues that perception is the process of receiving, selecting, interpreting, testing, and responding to information to obtain clearer data (Huda, 2017).

In the context of learning in this era of globalization, teachers are expected to be creative and active so that the learning process can be more effective and

easily understood by students. However, students often feel bored with monotonous learning, where the methods used are not varied, so that a new approach is needed so that students remain motivated and actively involved in class. This phenomenon shows the need for development in learning models accompanied by new innovations. Teachers can apply various activities such as ice breaking, brain gym, or games to increase learning motivation and train student concentration. Brain Gym is very useful for children who have learning difficulties or stress due to trying too hard, which can cause weakening of the brain's integration mechanism and reduced function of certain parts of the brain. It can also increase reflexes as a result of stress. When information received by the hindbrain is difficult to access by the forebrain, children tend to feel less capable. Therefore, Brain Gym is very important for children who feel less confident or fail, which has an impact on reducing the enthusiasm for learning or working, and causing stagnant or declining achievements.

Demuth put forward several reasons why Brain Gym needs to be implemented, including: (1) learning difficulties caused by excessive effort, so that the brain experiences stress, (2) the brain's integration mechanism becomes weak, resulting in some parts of the brain not functioning optimally, (3) information received by the back of the brain is difficult to process, which causes feelings of failure and reduced enthusiasm for learning, and (4) students who do not study enough will experience a decline in their pre-learning index, which ends in feelings of failure and difficulty getting out of this negative mindset. Therefore, Brain Gym can be one of the useful innovations in developing a learning process that is light and enjoyable for students (Akhmad Sukri, 2016).

Harmer (1991) explains that motivation is an internal drive that drives someone to do something to achieve a certain goal (Muaidi, 2019). Good motivation can increase students' attention, interest, and effort, which in turn can improve their learning focus (Borah, 2021). However, in reality, many students still experience low learning motivation. Laziness and lack of learning motivation have become common problems that often hinder student achievement (Sujanto, 2018). This low motivation is often seen from students' attitudes during learning, such as being sleepy or daydreaming. This condition indicates the need for efforts to revive student motivation so that it has a positive impact on their achievement. Another

example is when the teacher explains the material, some students seem busy with other activities that are not related to learning. Therefore, student motivation plays a very important role in the success of the learning process.

In this case, teachers can help increase students' learning motivation by giving praise or prizes as a form of appreciation for the efforts that have been made. In addition, teachers can also create a competitive atmosphere through games or activities such as Brain Gym related to the subject matter. Therefore, teacher perception becomes very important in determining how and in what way student motivation can be improved. In this modern era, teachers certainly have views on learning methods that can attract attention and increase student focus, one of which is through the use of Brain Gym videos. During the learning process, student responses are not always stable, and often many students have difficulty understanding the material due to lack of focus and interest in the lesson. Therefore, teachers are expected to create a fun and creative classroom atmosphere. This study also highlights the importance of teacher perception in identifying and selecting effective methods to improve student learning motivation.

One of the key factors of success in education that should not be ignored by teachers is the knowledge and character of students. Therefore, it is important for teachers to explore their perceptions in order to determine policies that are in accordance with the goals to be achieved. The assumption is that by understanding who the students are, how they learn, and the right ways to educate them, students' learning motivation can be improved. Research on teachers' perceptions of the application of Brain Gym to build students' learning motivation has not been widely conducted before. The main difference in this study is the selection of research subjects involving junior high school teachers at SMK Nurul Hasanah. Based on this background, the purpose of this study is to determine teachers' perceptions of the use of Brain Gym and how it affects students' learning motivation. In practice, there are still many teachers who focus only on delivering material, even though they should also be able to provide motivation and explain learning objectives so that students are more enthusiastic in following the learning process. Based on these problems, the formulation of the problem in this study is: What are teachers' perceptions of the use of Brain Gym in improving students' learning motivation?

And how does the use of Brain Gym affect students' learning motivation in the middle of lessons?

MATERIALS AND METHOD

A. Materials

Data sources in qualitative research are information obtained by researchers to answer questions in research. So that the data in this study are teachers as respondents or informants. Then, in this study applying convenience sampling, this sampling technique involves people who are easily reached and contacted by researchers. In data collection, the researcher determines the method to get the data needed, then proceeds to compile the instrument (Arikunto, 2010). This quantitative research uses several commonly used data collection techniques such as interviews, observation and documentation. Based on the research approach, researchers use thematic analysis. (Taroreh, 2021) states that there are several stages to conduct thematic analysis of qualitative data. In the first step, researchers must re-read and understand the data that has been obtained. Then do the initial code to determine specific results. Then continue by making a report that is linked to existing research and literature.

B. Method

This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to provide an overview of teacher perceptions regarding the use of Brain Gym to enhance student learning motivation. The descriptive method was divided into three forms of research: surveys, relationship studies, and developmental studies. In this study, the researchers used a survey study because they sought to describe the situation as it existed (Siedlecki, 2020). Moleong argued that qualitative research aims to understand the phenomenon experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perception, motivation, and other actions, in a descriptive manner using words and language through various natural methods (Moleong, 2017). The population of this study included all teachers at Nurul Hasanah Junior High School, totaling 15 individuals. The sample, also referred to as the research subjects, consisted of individuals related to the theories and phenomena being studied; in this case, the respondents were three teachers at the school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

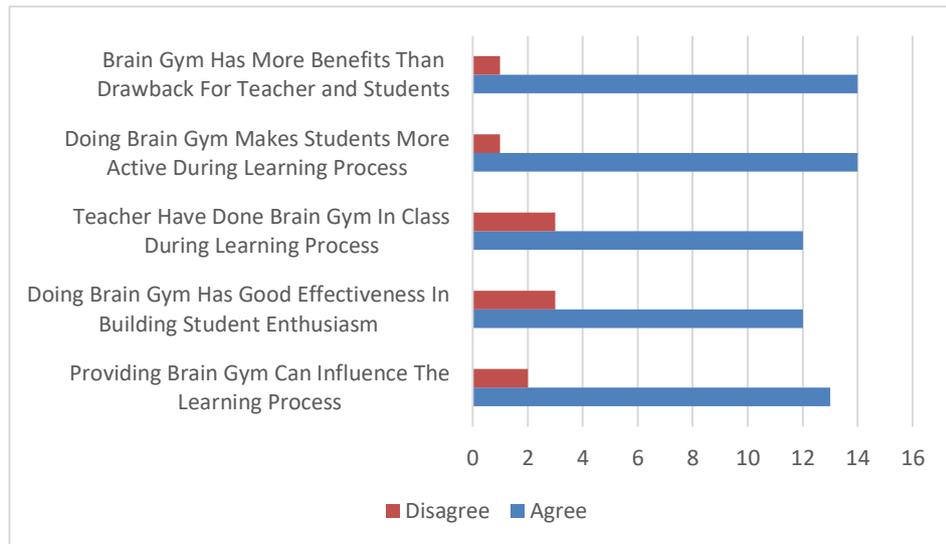


Chart 1. Teacher Perception of Using Brain Gym

The findings through interviews given by researchers to junior high school teachers obtained responses related to the use of brain gym in the classroom. The responses from these teachers have in common that doing a brain gym can build students' learning motivation. For teachers, building motivation and enthusiasm for student learning requires different ideas every day because junior high school students feel easily bored and bored. The picture above presents responses related to teachers who have implemented brain gym in between lessons. What can be clearly seen from the picture above is that the majority of teachers agree with the use of brain gym in building student learning motivation. However, some teachers also have contradictory responses that the use of brain gym has never been done in class. This shows that although some teachers disagree with opinions related to the use of brain gym, the majority of teachers agree that brain gym can train students' learning focus.

Nowadays teachers not only provide teaching but also must be able to create a comfortable learning atmosphere so that students can refocus on the material being taught. Therefore, in the learning process teachers can also provide brain gym to restore student focus. The success of student learning can be determined by their motivation. Students who have high learning motivation tend to have high achievement as well, otherwise their learning motivation is low, their achievement will also be low. High or low motivation can determine the height and also the low

of a person to do activities so that it affects the results obtained. A student who feels bored in learning will get no progress in learning outcomes. Therefore, a driver is needed to move students to have learning motivation so that they can improve learning outcomes.

As time has passed, the definition of motivation has developed in society . (Rahman, 2021) says learning motivation is often equated with the spirit of learning. Learning outcomes are the final results achieved by a student in developing his ability through a process carried out with effort through cognitive, affective, psychometric abilities and the overall effort he has to gain an experience so that the student experiences changes and knowledge from what has been observed. These learning outcomes can be seen from the evaluation scores obtained by students. From the explanation above, student learning motivation has an important intensity that can determine achievement in learning.

Brain gym is a form of effort made by teachers to build student learning motivation. Brain gym itself is used by teachers to train focus and has good benefits for the body because brain gym can help the body relax and calm down. The phenomenon that often occurs in students who underachieve is not because of their lack of ability, but because there is no motivation to learn so that these students do not try to exert their abilities. Some points related to the results of the researcher's interview will be conveyed as follows:

1. Teacher perceptions of using brain gym

From the results of the study, it is known that the perceptions of junior high school teachers have similar perceptions of the use of brain gym. The results of interviews regarding the use of brain gym by junior high school teachers said that doing brain gym can make students relax so that learning will be easy to understand. Doing brain gym can also increase teacher creativity and can be a reference for other teachers. Brain gym also has an influence on the learning process that takes place because to create an active classroom atmosphere, a little brain stimulation is needed to students so as to create learning motivation that can increase students' enthusiasm for learning. This is in line with the results of research conducted by (Agus Muslim, 2024) that brain gym has effectiveness in overcoming learning difficulties, creating self-confidence and strengthening student learning motivation.

From this statement, teachers' perceptions regarding the use of brain gym are considered effective because it makes students more active and teachers become creative. Teachers consider the use of brain gym is expected to help students become active and focus more easily during the learning process. This is in line with the research of Ahmad Sukri & Elly Purwanti (2016) with the title "Improving Student Learning Outcomes with Brain Gym" which shows that by doing brain gym, students are expected to be more ready to learn and can improve student learning outcomes (Akhmad Sukri, 2016)

The reason why teachers give such perceptions is because most of them have experienced it. Then boredom in the learning process will arise in teachers and students. The boredom experienced certainly occurs with the way the material is delivered by the teacher with the same method such as providing explanations and material and assignments alone, making some students feel bored and want the learning to end immediately. So that teachers are required to find other methods or ways to be given to students so that the material and tasks delivered can be in a varied way every day.

The results of interviews about teachers' experience in using brain gym have the same opinion. The opinion in question is that they have been and even often use brain gym during the learning process to keep their students focused and more conducive. The whole picture below is taken from (Handryastuti, 2002) The brain gym movements that have been done as below:



Picture 1 Cross Crawl

These simple movements can increase students' motivation to learn. The first movement can start with the Cross Crawl which improves visual and auditory coordination and memory. Coordinate the movements so that if one hand moves then the opposite leg moves at the same time.



Picture 2 Lazy Eight

The next movement uses the Lazy Eight or infinite symbol. This movement starts in the center. First the hands counterclockwise form a circle then clockwise form a circle and return to the center point. This movement can improve reading, writing and comprehension skills.



Picture 3 Belly Breathing

Then continue by placing both hands on the stomach, then take a deep breath and slowly then exhale regularly. This movement serves to increase student energy. In addition, this movement also serves to increase the supply of oxygen to the entire body, especially the brain. This movement is proven to improve reading and speaking skills.



Picture 4 Brains Buttons

It stimulates the flow of oxygenated blood through the carotid artery to the brain. It helps to re-shape the focus from the body parts to the brain and vision and improves the connection between the brain for reading, writing, and speaking. This movement is done by touching the navel and massaging the bone around the chest.



Picture 5 The Thinking Cap

This movement evokes listening and memory mechanisms. It improves students' listening ability, short-term memory and thinking skills. It is done by gently opening and massaging the earlobe outwards.

When doing the movements above, students are very enthusiastic when doing it. The atmosphere created in the classroom while doing the exercises also became calmer and more focused by the students who were excited to do the exercises. After doing the steps, the students looked relaxed in the learning process.

Based on the results of interview answers with teachers related to the benefits obtained when using brain gym, as explained above, in addition to making students focus and the classroom atmosphere becoming conducive, brain gym also has a positive impact on student concentration. Brain gym is needed for children who have difficulty learning, trying too hard resulting in stress and pressure. Brain gym is needed for children who have a feeling of lack of success, resulting in reduced enthusiasm for learning. In addition, brain gym can also reduce the level of depression that students may experience. This is in line with research conducted by (Andria Praghlapati, 2019) that brain gym has an influence that can reduce depression levels. Another study conducted by (Widarti, 2023) has the result that a brain gym can also relieve stress.

Therefore, brain gym is done because it can release the potential that is hidden in the body. Brain gym can also make the mind more relaxed and happy, students will be creative and learning motivation will increase. Another advantage of brain gym is that it allows learning and teaching without stress because it is done in a short time. Brain gym also does not require special materials or places so that it can adjust the learning situation.

2. Results of Student Learning Motivation through Brain Gym

Based on the results of this study, brain gym is proven to increase student learning motivation. Judging from the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of students when following brain gym movements, the results showed that students were more active and focused during the learning process activities. Although some students still seemed to pay less attention or less to the material presented by the teacher, it was not as bad as before the brain gym was applied. The results of this study are similar to research conducted by (Nurlika, 2021) which shows that the level of student learning concentration increases.

Concentration is an effort that students can improve through focus training. Efforts made by teachers to improve student focus include instilling student motivation, creating a conducive learning environment, or having an active learning class. After the brain gym, changes occurred slowly to students' concentration levels. This is evidenced by the teacher's statement that students can focus more on paying attention and listening well when the material is delivered.

Basically, brain gym is a movement that aims to reduce excessive sensitivity, so that the brain is more relaxed. In addition, brain gym also has a function to maintain body balance and coordination and improve concentration skills. Simple brain gym movements aim to balance the left and right brain. Although sports that are commonly done at school also have simple movements, they have different purposes. While school sports are meant to improve the heart, lungs or muscles, brain gym is meant to improve the brain's performance.

As explained, brain gym movements have benefits that can improve health, positive behavior and build learning motivation, therefore brain gym is expected to always be implemented in the learning process to create interesting learning, while building the character of students for the better. The thing that teachers should pay attention to during the brain gym activity process is the seriousness, sustainability and patience of students and teachers to apply these movements in every learning activity, because this activity is still new to the school.

But behind the benefits that can be received when doing brain gym, teachers also have some obstacles or distractions when this brain gym process is carried out. The obstacles that teachers have are not as many as the benefits received. The obstacles in question such as the time given for the learning process will be reduced

because of doing brain gym. Sometimes the classroom atmosphere becomes too noisy due to students who are too excited to do brain gym so that the teachers have difficulty calming the students. Some students are also sometimes not serious when participating in brain gym and start disturbing their friends. The obstacles that exist in the process of doing brain gyms mean that the teacher's job must continue to run well and restore students' learning motivation.

From some of the problems experienced by teachers, there are solutions that can be done to overcome existing problems. First, teachers can replace brain gym activities that have already been done with brain gyms that have never been done. The goal is to reduce the feeling of boredom of students with movements that have never been done. Second, teachers can take a maximum of three or five brain gym movements each day so that students' learning hours are not reduced too much. This has the same effectiveness as many existing brain gym movements and does not waste too much student time. Then finally, teachers can check on students one by one to make sure they follow the brain gym activities in an orderly manner without having to make excessive noise.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research that has been done, brain gym has a positive influence on teachers and students. The positive effects include increased learning motivation and concentration, increased teacher creativity in teaching, reduced levels of stress and depression. This brain gym movement can be done by the teacher at the beginning of learning, in the middle of the learning process or at the end of the learning process. There are many different types of brain gym exercises, and teachers can choose which exercises to do with their students. Teachers' perceptions of brain gym are positive because they have done brain gym themselves.

Among the perceptions given by teachers, most of them agree that brain gym can build students' learning motivation. This is in line with research conducted by (Pratama, 2020) that brain gym movement helps students to concentrate in class. Brain gym can be one of the solutions to solve students' concentration and motivation problems. Teachers argue that sometimes they give students a break from learning to reduce their boredom in learning. Because if students feel bored, then their concentration and focus will decrease. They also said that students will quickly feel bored if the learning model is too monotonous and focused on books

or materials only. Students feel most bored when the least interested subjects such as math or English.

Based on the above statement, the teacher concluded that other activities are needed for learning breaks with the aim of restoring or increasing students' learning motivation. Increasing learning motivation can be done by using brain gym, ice breaking or games related to the learning material. Teachers' perceptions also state that as long as they use this brain gym, the classroom atmosphere that is created becomes more active, fun, lively, and enjoy the material being taught. This perception can be an advantage of the brain gym used in class. The teacher gives students a learning pause for 10-15 minutes. During these few minutes the teacher does the brain gym as mentioned. As a result, the classroom atmosphere that is created becomes more active and the stress experienced by students caused by learning also decreases. This is in line with research conducted by (Vaishnavi V Siroya, 2021) that brain gyms can relieve stress and depression levels in students.

The following describes the limitations during the research carried out, namely the first related to time, because this research focuses on teacher perceptions in using brain gym to build student learning motivation so that the time needed is teaching time. Then, the last is the place where this research was carried out at the school where the researcher directly met the resource person, because the subject of this research is a teacher for junior high school level so that there may be differences in results if the research is carried out by taking different subjects.

CONCLUSION

1. Teachers' perceptions regarding brain gym implementation in classrooms demonstrate overwhelmingly positive responses. Teachers view brain gym as an effective tool that enhances both student engagement and their own teaching creativity. The simple yet impactful movements create a conducive learning environment, leading many teachers to regularly incorporate brain gym during lessons to maintain student focus.
2. The implementation of brain gym shows clear positive results in terms of student learning motivation. Students demonstrate increased enthusiasm and active participation during learning activities, with noticeable improvements in concentration levels. Unlike regular physical education that focuses on physical fitness, brain gym specifically targets brain performance through

movements that reduce sensitivity while maintaining body balance and coordination.

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