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THE ROLE OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AT SMP NEGERI 8 PERCUT SEI TUAN

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of interpersonal communication in improving students' academic achievement at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan. Interpersonal communication, especially between teachers and students, plays an important role in creating a supportive and positive educational environment. This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, collecting data through interviews and direct observations in the field. The results showed that open and effective communication between teachers, students, and parents can increase students' motivation, self-confidence, and involvement in the learning process. With good communication, teachers can better understand students' needs, so they are able to provide appropriate guidance. Strong communication also builds supportive relationships between students and educators, which have a significant impact on improving academic achievement.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is a very important thing and becomes a necessity in an individual, especially when socializing, the way an individual communicates with the surrounding environment greatly determines the relationship of the individual with the surrounding environment. In everyday life, humans need intense communication, both with themselves and with the surrounding environment. Even in an organization or educational institution that has a structure, the magnitude of the role of communication greatly determines the good or bad relationship in the organization or institution, which means that communication occupies the most determining position (Amar, 2024: 26).

Communication is very important in education. Effective communication can increase school productivity. To realize school goals, it is necessary to have the same perception and actions from all school members. The same perception can be achieved through good communication. Likewise, in teaching and learning activities in the classroom, effective communication is needed from teachers and students.(Hidayat, Hardianto, 2023: 45).

Communication in educational institutions between individuals must be open, meaning here the communication has a response between the communicant and the communicator. So communication in educational institutions has an important role, because at any time individuals or small groups will interact. If there is no communication in education, then what will happen in the education is that there is no compatibility in the interaction process.(Ali Nurhadi, 2019: 56).

Some problems that are being faced by students sometimes become easier to solve by establishing good communication between teachers and students. This interpersonal communication is often called interpersonal communication.(Royanti, Wahdiansyah, & Rahmawati, 2023). The purpose of interpersonal communication is to organize deeper relationships, form self-concepts and develop good personalities. In addition, one of the functions of interpersonal communication applied by a teacher to help students in the process of finding problem solving from problems experienced by students is the function to educate. The field of education is to provide important information regarding knowledge that aims to make learning activities from teachers to students a success.(Rahmawati, Hasmawati, & Hamandia, 2024: 34).

Interpersonal communication is an important thing in human life, as well as in educational institutions such as schools. Schools are educational institutions that aim to improve knowledge about ethics, morals and discipline.

Every school needs teachers who are competitive in teaching and education that are innovative, creative and have enough time to fulfill their mission.(R. Firdaus Wahyudi & Suriati, 2023: 78). The key structures of interpersonal communication can influence the perception of student characteristics and the placement of students in certain ways. Teachers may use some of the language choices made in class to introduce the information given in a way that blocks agency, and thus the ideas presented are not actively engaged.(Sari, Ferdiansyah, Surtiyoni, & Arizona, 2022: 134).

Educators are professionals who are tasked with planning and implementing the learning process, assessing learning outcomes, providing guidance and training to students. Educators must have minimum qualifications and certification according to the level of teaching authority, be physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to realize national education goals.(Wally, 2022): 54. As educators are also responsible for providing a positive, safe learning environment, by creating an inclusive environment, educators can help students to actively participate in learning and develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and their environment (Amar 2023: 21).

A good learning process has an impact on achievement. A good process is obtained from good communication and interaction between teachers and students. In essence, achievement is the achievement of activities that have been created, done(Iwanda, 2020: 34). Achievement is not produced by someone who does not do activities. Achievement is a positive result of activities that have been achieved, including learning activities. Achievement is obtained by working hard and is done with perseverance and work tenacity.(Sidik & Sobandi, 2018: 34).

Based on this concept, achievement is a result of previous abilities with a struggle and challenges that have been faced. Achievement can be achieved with the efforts and abilities that are owned. Achievement can be achieved with the skills possessed by the individual. So an achievement can be achieved in the previous process such as struggle, challenges and skills.

Learning will be successful and achieving achievements is influenced by several factors, including communication between teachers and students. A teacher or educator who faces various problems in communicating needs to be overcome by choosing and determining alternative solutions. For that, an educator must know about

interpersonal communication so that communication can run effectively and can affect the achievement of student learning achievements.

SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei is one of the educational institutions with achievements.This achievement was obtained since the interpersonal communication process in the institution became more open. The role of interpersonal communication is a positive interaction that must be built by educators in maintaining friendship between educators. This communication is not only related to the learning process, but also has a major influence on the quality of learning and can contribute to the achievement of student academic achievement. Therefore, a study was conducted to explore the existing phenomenon with the title: The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Improving Student Academic Achievement at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan.

METHOD

The type of research used is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a scientific research that aims to understand a phenomenon in a social context naturally by prioritizing the process of deep communication interaction between researchers and the phenomenon being studied.

More data is collected take the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Results written research contains quotes-quote Daridata For illustrate And provide proof presentation. The data covers interview transcripts, field notes, photography, videotapes, personal documents, memos, and other official records.

The data sources in this study are: (1) Primary data. Primary data sources were obtained by researchers through interviews and field observations of respondents. Respondents are people who are asked for information about a fact or opinion, the information can be conveyed in written or oral form. Respondents in this study were Indonesian language teachers. (2) Secondary data sources, obtained through observations conducted at SMP N 8 Percut Sei Tuan.

Data analysis conducted as stated by Riduwan (2003) data reduction, namely making an abstraction of all data obtained from all field notes from observation results, interviews and document reviews. Data presentation, namely a collection of structured information that provides the possibility of drawing conclusions in taking action. Data presentation in qualitative research is with descriptive text. Conclusions and verification of data that have been arranged in such a way (patterned, focused, systematically arranged) are then concluded so that the meaning of the data can be

found (Nurasiah & Zulkhairi, 2021: 3).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

In this section, the researcher will present the results of the research that has been conducted by collecting data according to the focus of the research and according to the data in the field. so that several things are found as a form of research findings. Some of the findings include the following:

The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Improving Students' Academic Achievement at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan

Interpersonal communication plays a vital role in improving student academic achievement by building positive relationships between students, teachers, and parents. Effective and open communication allows teachers to better understand the needs, abilities, and challenges faced by each student. When teachers are able to provide encouragement, input, and guidance directly and personally, students feel more valued and motivated. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by the resource person where good communication with students can affect learning achievement. He said that:

"Of course it is very influential, because if the student is quiet we also do not know whether he understands the lesson or not. Some are quiet because they understand, there are also those who are quiet because they do not understand. Teachers also cannot always pay attention to the overall behavior of students. Moreover, grades are not only obtained from exams but also from how the student behaves in class every day, the student's activeness."

In addition, good interpersonal communication can build students' self-confidence. By getting specific and personal feedback, students can identify their strengths and areas for improvement, making it easier for them to focus on learning. Teachers can also use interpersonal communication to encourage students to be actively involved in class, which has a positive impact on their understanding of the material and their critical thinking skills. As for the form of school contribution in supporting students' courage in communicating and expressing their opinions, he said that:

"First, of course, teachers always encourage good language and communication skills to all their students. Then, for activities at school, there is literacy. The goal is for students to dare to express their opinions and communicate in public. There are two types of literacy in this school, namely English and Indonesian literacy, each of which

has its own schedule and teacher. There are two meetings a week on Tuesday and Wednesday. All teachers take part in this literacy."

On the other hand, interpersonal communication involving parents is also important. Through good communication between schools and parents, students' academic development and needs can be monitored together, creating a supportive environment that can significantly improve students' academic achievement. He said that:

"We must communicate with each other, because the ones who know how the child is at home are the parents, while at school the homeroom teacher and other subject teachers have a role in monitoring the child's development. Especially at school, how is the child's presentation, is he able to communicate well with his friends and teachers. Like when there is a child who rarely comes to school or who rarely does assignments, the homeroom teacher will definitely follow up first before contacting the student's parents. Or even the school, namely the homeroom teacher and BK teacher will visit the student at home. Because the condition of each student is different, health, economy, so we must analyze the student first."

Based on the results of the interviews that have been conducted, it can be seen that interpersonal communication has a significant role in improving students' academic achievement at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan. Through effective communication between teachers, students, and parents, schools are able to create positive and supportive relationships, which have an impact on increasing students' motivation and self-confidence. Teachers who provide personal attention and feedback help students recognize their strengths and weaknesses, making it easier for students to focus on learning. In addition, students' active involvement in literacy activities organized by the school also contributes to the development of communication skills and students' courage to express their opinions in public.

Interpersonal communication also plays an important role in collaboration between schools and parents. With good communication, schools and parents can monitor students' academic progress together, allowing for quick handling of problems faced by students. With a holistic approach, such as follow-up by homeroom teachers and BK teachers, schools ensure that each student gets the attention they need according to their conditions, both in terms of health and economic background.

DISCUSSION

Interpersonal Communication Model in Improving Students' Academic Achievement at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Seituan

Effective interpersonal communication is an important element in the world of education, especially in efforts to improve student academic achievement. At SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan, the interpersonal communication model between teachers and students is designed so that learning messages can be received well and meaningfully. In this model, teachers not only act as teachers, but also as communicators who are able to understand and adjust the delivery method according to student needs. The model or way of communicating with students every day in the classroom based on the results of his interviews said that:

“To communicate with students, of course, we as teachers must use language that is easy to understand, either standard language or everyday language. To explain, I usually use the easiest language to understand by combining standard language and everyday language, so that the messages and lessons that I convey to students can be easily understood. Because if we only stick to the standard language in the book, not all students will be able to understand. So we have to adjust our language to be understood by students. So, the delivery of learning can be accepted and meaningful by all students.”

He further stated:

"I personally try to be as similar as possible both inside and outside the school, because I'm afraid of exaggerating the closeness that should be. For example, when we communicate with students at school with the greeting 'peer', I'm afraid that outside they will dare to be more than 'peer'. So, if we apply formal language such as "sir/buk" then when outside the school they will use the same greeting, have limits, and respect their teachers."

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that the interpersonal communication model applied by teachers at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan emphasizes the importance of simplicity and flexibility in language so that learning can be well understood by all students. Teachers try to convey material with a combination of standard and everyday language, adjusting language that is easy for students to understand, so that learning messages can be received effectively and meaningfully. In addition, teachers maintain a balance in closeness to students by continuing to use formal greetings such as "sir" or "buk," both inside and outside the school environment.

This approach aims to build a warm but respectful relationship, helping students appreciate teachers as educators who deserve to be respected in all situations.

Communication between teachers and students often needs to be delivered in simpler and contextual language, adjusting to the level of student understanding. With this clarity, each party understands better, so that the teaching and learning process and educational administration become more efficient. This is in accordance with the results of the interview, he said that:

"Of course, in grade 9 the communication we deliver is simpler and easier for them to understand. Because maybe in grade 9 they can think better, their reasoning has started to improve, so they can understand a little of what is delivered. But in grade 8 not everyone can understand the language delivered, so there must be repetitions, using more detailed, clearer language, so they understand better. However, again we cannot equate students in grade 9 or grade 9 because everyone's language and communication levels are different. So, there are indeed differences in communication at each level, although not significant."

He further stated:

"By freeing each student to express their opinions in their own language, as long as the language is polite, as long as they use good Indonesian even though it is not correct. Because Indonesian must be good and correct, I free each student to express their opinions and communicate in their own language, because if the student often expresses opinions, communicates then they will be trained and over time the language they use will be good and correct too."

Based on the interview results, it can be seen that teachers at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan adjust their communication methods according to the level of understanding of students at each level. For grade 9, the language used is simpler because students tend to understand quickly, while in grade 8 more detailed explanations are needed. Teachers also give students the freedom to express their opinions in their own language as long as they are polite, in order to train their communication skills, so that the Indonesian they use becomes better and more correct over time.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be seen that interpersonal communication at SMP Negeri 8 Percut Sei Tuan plays an important role in supporting students' academic achievement. Teachers apply simple and flexible

language according to the students' level of understanding, creating a warm and respectful atmosphere. In class, teachers adjust communication to level, giving students the freedom to express their opinions in their own language to hone their communication skills.

In addition, good communication between schools and parents allows for more effective monitoring of student progress. This collaboration helps create an environment that supports student motivation, self-confidence, and academic achievement.

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