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STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH GAME-BASED LEARNING AT THE EIGHTH GRADE OF SMP ALFAQIH MUQADDAM KUBU RAYA

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Abstract. *This study explores the effect of game-based learning on students' motivation in learning English at the eighth grade of SMP Alfaqih Muqaddam, Kubu Raya. Two games, Sentence Scramble and Matching Words, were used as instructional media, and a descriptive qualitative approach was employed through classroom observations and student interviews. The research focused on motivational aspects such as interest, participation, and enthusiasm. The findings show that students were more attentive, engaged, and enthusiastic during game-based lessons compared to traditional teaching. Collaboration and enthusiasm were the most strongly influenced aspects, while vocabulary-focused activities, particularly Matching Words, generated slightly higher participation than grammar-focused activities like Sentence Scramble. Students reported that games made learning English more enjoyable and less intimidating. The teacher confirmed these results, noting improvements in vocabulary mastery and sentence construction, though challenges such as classroom noise, time management, and shy students were observed. The study suggests that teachers should regularly integrate games while balancing them with traditional methods. Schools can support this approach with resources and training. Future research may expand the sample size, explore different types of games, and investigate the long-term effects on English proficiency. Overall, game-based learning effectively enhances students' motivation and engagement in English lessons.*
Keywords: *Game-Based Learning, Motivation, English Learning, Vocabulary,*

INTRODUCTION

English has become an essential language in the global era, not only as a tool for communication but also as a requirement in education, technology, and international relations. For students, mastering English involves several skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. However, achieving proficiency in these skills often depends on students' motivation and engagement. Motivation is a key factor in the learning process, as it drives students to actively participate, persist in learning, and overcome challenges. According to Dornyei (2001), highly motivated students tend to be more attentive, enthusiastic, and willing to take risks in using the language, which ultimately improves their learning outcomes. Conversely, low motivation can lead to passive learning, lack of participation, and slower progress.