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Learning growth and development of living things topic: An analysis of students' interest at a private middle school in Labuhanbatu district

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ABSTRACT

Students' engagement and curiosity in learning Biology is suboptimal, hence innovative teaching methods are required to cultivate their interest and enhance their understanding of the subject matter. The research aims to identify differences in students' interest in learning Biology across grades VII, VIII, and IX, based on gender and other indicators. The study analyzes the variations in students' interest in the growth and development of living creatures at Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School, Labuhanbatu Regency. The research population comprises all students at the school, with a research sample of 64 students using total sampling techniques. The study employed a quantitative descriptive research method and used a questionnaire of 20 statements calculated using a Likert scale. The data analysis involved descriptive description of the average percentage of students' interest in learning. The research results revealed that: (1) Grade VII students' interest in learning was categorized as high (65.62%), Grade VIII high (62.69%) and Grade IX medium (51.60%); (2) Students' interest in learning based on gender showed that males were in the medium category (54.28%) in paying attention to lessons, while females were higher (65.23%); and (3) Student interest in learning based on indicators, namely feelings of enjoyment in participating in learning amounting to (59.68%), attention (58.99%), interest (57.43%), and student involvement (60.11%). The study concludes that Grade VIII students exhibit higher interest in learning Biology than their Grade VII and IX counterparts. Based on gender, female students demonstrate greater interest in learning than male students. The study also indicates that students' feelings of joy, attention, interest, and involvement are in the medium category. Factors that influence the level of student learning include the family environment, motivation, and interest in learning. Innovative teaching methods can help support students' higher interest in learning, including interest and feelings of enjoyment in learning.

Keywords: Gender, growth and development, learning interest

INTRODUCTION

The National Education System, which is the foundation of the Indonesian education system, aspires to help students achieve their potential as complete human beings by instilling respect, faith and devotion to God Almighty as well as the desire to learn and be independent. On the other hand, a number of elements have a role in the standards of the Indonesian education system.

The world of education has several problems to face, one of these problems arises from the weakness of the learning process (Tarigan et al., 2019). Education is a process that is necessary to achieve balance and perfection in the development of individuals and society.

Education aims to form the awareness and personality of individuals or society in addition to the transfer of knowledge and expertise. In this process, a nation or state can pass on religious values, culture, thoughts and skills to the next generation, so that they are ready to welcome a brighter future for the nation and state (Nurkholis, 2013).

Education aims to improve the quality of educational processes and outcomes that lead to the formation of students' character and noble morals in a complete, integrated and balanced manner. Therefore, it is crucial to enhance students' interest in learning, so that they are enthusiastic about achieving success. The main

obligation of an educator is to cultivate students' character with good interests (Suprianto et. al, 2020).

In the learning process, students' desire to learn is often suboptimal, leading to a lack of interest in understanding the material. There is a pressing need for innovative teaching methods from educators, such as the use of applications and learning techniques that can foster students' interest in learning, thereby enhancing their understanding of the lessons. Teachers must understand students' desire to learn using scientific approaches that support student learning progress. With innovative teaching methods, students' interest in learning will grow, leading to a higher desire to learn, and enabling them to achieve their goals effectively. Therefore, all interested parties can support efforts to improve the general level of education to make it better. Providing education can create excellence in thinking, reasoning, moral strength and academic ethics so that it can improve the quality of education. Improving quality cannot be separated from the impact of the growth of a new paradigm in the world of education which demands the implementation of quality education.

The smoothness of teaching and learning activities depends on students' willingness to participate in the learning process. Students with high learning motivation can enhance the teaching and learning process, while those who are less motivated to learn may exhibit low learning quality, which can negatively impact learning outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to be support systems that explores students' interests by explaining the material through creative learning models. This can serve as a basis for learning innovation that can be adapted to the planning of the material presented, thereby increasing knowledge and encouraging students' learning motivation, ultimately leading to better learning outcomes.

Students' low interest in learning includes changes in behavior that occur in life and experiences. Changes in behavior in learning are related to regularities that occur in the environment so that they have a role in learning (De Houwer et. al, 2013). Therefore, positive learning is needed which can increase motivation to take part in the learning process seriously.

Interest in learning is an aspect of a person's psychology such as a desire or feeling of liking to carry out the process of changing behavior through various activities which include seeking knowledge and experience. In other words, interest in learning is the attention, liking, interest of a person (student) in learning which is shown through enthusiasm, participation and activeness in learning (Sirait, 2016).

In this context, plants can increase the number of cells through reproductive processes. This process occurs when female germ cells and male gametes mate. Pollination occurs when pollen attaches to the stigma, and hydration and fertilization occur through moisture. Fertilization is the joining of sperm cells and egg cells, which initiates the development process. In animals, growth and development are characterized by generative reproduction and can be oviparous or viviparous. For example, animals such as chickens and ducks are classified as Aves (Anisa et al., 2022).

Through interviews and classroom observations of the learning process, the findings of observations carried out at Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School, Labuhanbatu Regency during the learning process can be seen in the students' interest in learning at Grade VII, VIII, and IX. One of the most significant problems is that most students often talk to themselves while they are being taught and learning, which greatly disrupts the flow of the learning process. This is because it can distract other students who are trying to pay attention and because students who talk to themselves will not be able to absorb information well. As a result, students are bored with the conditions of teaching and learning activities and there are no clear procedures for organizing student activities, interest in learning after learning becomes limited. Apart from that, students are not very interested in learning when

the teacher only uses a lecture approach. Only 30% were categorized as low, meaning that students did not complete their education due to low interest in learning, which had an impact on student learning outcomes, which only completed 70%. Lack of interest in asking questions causes students to lack understanding of the material presented.

Students at Adventist Private Middle Schools of Grade VII, VIII, and IX like learning with video and audio images, so the role of teachers in schools needs to be improved in learning styles with a kinesthetic learning style approach such as showing interactive biology videos, in this case material on plant growth and development. The kinesthetic learning style is highly recommended so that students are more interested in understanding the material well. To ensure that learning occurs as effectively as possible, it is important to determine each student's preferred learning style. According to research by (Zakiyah, 2019) that there is a significant and positive relationship between kinesthetic learning style and students' interest in learning. This research is also supported in the journal (Bire, 2014) with the title The Influence of Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic Learning Styles on Student Learning Achievement. In this research, the results showed that the kinesthetic learning style had a positive relationship with learning achievement. This means that the influence of kinesthetic learning style on learning achievement is in the quite strong category.

The teacher's approach to controlling the teaching and learning process in the classroom still seems to be one of the key determining variables in the learning process. Teachers only focus on the teacher centered method so that students feel less interested in the learning methods used. Students are not invited to think creatively and innovatively in understanding the material. Teachers still use lecture methods which make students disinterested and reluctant to comment. This method prevents students from being able to solve real world problems (Citra et al., 2021).

Student interest in learning is a very determining component in achieving success in the teaching and learning process. Interest has an impact on student learning outcomes in learning with high desire/encouragement. Because learning will not run as effectively as possible without students' desire to learn about the process. This is in line with research by Munif that the research results show that student interest is dominated by students who get good category scores. Learning achievements obtained from knowledge scores and skill scores all received good category scores. Student interest in biology subjects has a positive effect on learning achievement, this is proven based on the results of hypothesis testing which shows that there is a significant relationship between student interest and students' learning achievement in biology subjects (Munif, 2019).

An interest or willingness to support learning is critical to success. Students who have an interest in learning will tend to be diligent, tenacious, enthusiastic about learning, never give up and happy to face challenges. They view every learning obstacle as a challenge that must be overcome. Children who are highly interested in learning generally enjoy every learning activity, so that they learn not only to fulfill obligations and duties from teachers or parents' demands, but also make learning a need that must be fulfilled for themselves.

Having high interest and interest in learning will have a big impact on student learning success. Student engagement in eye class can be used as a measure of how well students have mastered their learning objectives. It is hoped that motivated students will participate actively in their education and achieve the highest levels of learning. Therefore, every student must have a high interest in the subjects they study while they are at school (Sari, 2020).

The research described previously shows that interest in learning influences student achievement. This means that the higher the student's interest in learning, the better the student's achievement will be. Based on this

description, this research aims to analyze students' interest in learning about the growth and development of living things at Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School. This study expects that there will be evaluation and follow-up on implementing better learning.

METHOD

Research setting

This study was carried out at Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School located at Jalan Malinda Panai Tengah, Panai Tengah District, Labuhanbatu Regency from February to April 2023.

Population and sample

Population is a generalized area consisting of subjects who have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then conclusions drawn (Sugiyono, 2014). The population in this study were 64 students in grades VII, VIII and IX of Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School to see the extent of their interest in learning about the growth and development of living things. The sampling technique used a total sampling technique of 64 students. The details of the number of students at the school can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of students

No	Grade	Gender		Number
		Male	Female	
1	VII	10	11	21
2	VIII	5	8	13
3	IX	14	16	30
Total		29	35	64

Research approach

The research employed a quantitative descriptive research method. The data analysis process used a simple average calculation as the measurement system. The approach to testing the influence between variables is also known as quantitative descriptive research (Noor, 2017). The research employed a descriptive research method, which aims to accurately and systematically describe a situation or event as it is (Sudaryono, 2017).

Research instruments

The instrument used to determine students' interest in learning about the growth and development of living things is a questionnaire consisting of 20 statements, which can be found in Table 2.

Research procedures

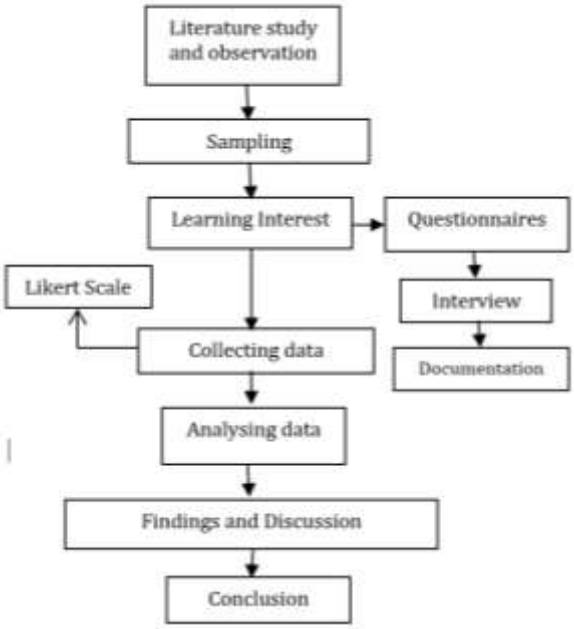

Figure 1. Research procedure

Table 2. Students' learning interest

Indicators	Number of questions	Statements	
		(+)	(-)
Students' enjoymen	5	1, 4, 8	11, 14
Students' attention	5	2, 10	12, 16, 20
Students' interest	5	6, 7, 9	17, 19
Students' engageme	5	3, 5	13, 15, 18
Total	20	10	10

(Source: Adapted from Sari, 2020)

Data collection technique

The main sources of data in qualitative research are words, actions and some additional data such as documents and so on (Windayani dkk, 2018). The data collection technique is triangulation. Triangulation was carried out using questionnaires, interviews and documentation (Arikunto, 2014). Data collection techniques are needed to address the formulation of research problems. Questionnaires, Interviews, and documentation are the types of data collection used.

- *Questionnaires*
  A questionnaire is a data collection instrument in which respondents respond to written statements to measure the dependent variable.
- *Interview*
  Interviews are a method of contact between researchers and informants or research subjects with the aim of collecting information related to research variables.
- *Documentation*
  Documentation is a way of obtaining data by documenting activities in research.

Validity and reliability

The validity test is used to measure the accuracy of an item in a questionnaire or scale, whether the items in the questionnaire are correct in measuring what you want to measure, or you can carry out a direct assessment using the Pearson correlation method or the corrected item-total correlation method.

Validity is related to the question of the extent to which a measuring instrument has measured what it is supposed to measure. Testing criteria for validity:

a) If $r_{count} > r_{table}$, this means that the research indicators used in this research are declared valid.
b) If $r_{count} < r_{table}$, this means that the research indicators used in this research are declared valid.

Meanwhile, reliability testing is used to determine the consistency of the measuring instrument, whether the measuring instrument used is reliable and remains consistent if the measurement is repeated." The reliability test method that is often used is Cronbach's Alpha. This method is very suitable for use with scale scores (eg 1-4, 1-5) or range scores (e.g. 0-10, 0-30). To determine whether an instrument is reliable or not, certain limits such as 0.6 can be used.

Data analysis

The data analysis technique employed is descriptive statistics using percentages, which is one of the data analysis strategies used to evaluate the level of student interest in learning about the growth and development of living things at Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School. Descriptive statistics is a subset of statistics used to gather information, calculate statistical values, and create easy-to-read diagrams and graphs on various topics.

The mean and grand mean formulas are used in the descriptive statistical data analysis approach used. The average value of all sub-variables is calculated using the mean formula. The mean and grand mean formulas are used below:

$$\boldsymbol{X} = \frac{\sum \mathbf{X}}{\mathbf{n}}$$

Notes:
$\sum x$ = score of data
X = mean
n = number of data

(Wahyuni, 2020)

In this research, the assessment range determined is with values in categories, namely as follows.

Table 3. Assessment categories

No	Categories	Interval level
1	Very high	81-100
2	High	61-80
3	Medium	41-60
4	Low	21-40
5	Very low	0-20

(Source: Adapted from Sudjono, 2011)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire is said to be valid when the value of r_{Count} is higher than r_{table}. The first step in validity is when the researcher has conducted research, the researcher compiles it by tabulating the Excel data, then adding it up. The test validity results can be seen in the following table.

Table 4. Validity test

Item	r_{count}	r_{table}	Description
X1	0.717	0.678	Valid
X2	0.692	0.678	Valid
X3	0.751	0.678	Valid
X4	0.705	0.678	Valid
X5	0.703	0.678	Valid
X6	0.711	0.678	Valid

Item	r_{count}	r_{table}	Description
X7	0.710	0.678	Valid
X8	0.730	0.678	Valid
X9	0.694	0.678	Valid
X10	0.751	0.678	Valid
X11	0.692	0.678	Valid
X12	0.721	0.678	Valid
X13	0.706	0.678	Valid
X14	0.723	0.678	Valid
X15	0.731	0.678	Valid
X16	0.704	0.678	Valid
X17	0.760	0.678	Valid
X18	0.715	0.678	Valid
X19	0.761	0.678	Valid
X20	0.696	0.678	Valid

The first r_{table} technique determines whether each statement item is valid or not. At the 5% significance level, a value was found r_{table} *product moment* for n = 39. The score of r_{table} 0,678 then discovered. A statement is considered valid if the Item-Total Correlation is large, or r_{count}, higher than 0.678. Thus, it can be concluded that all the statements above are valid. An indicator is said to be reliable when the Cronbach Alpha value is more than 0.60.

Table 5. Reliability test

Instrument Variable	Score of *Cronbach Alpha*	Description
Learning interest in Reliable Growth and Development of Living Creatures (X)	0.950	Reliable

Each instrument variable in the research has a Cronbach Alpha value of more than 0.60, as seen in the table above. Thus, it can be said that the interest indicator is reliable.

Results of student interest in learning at Bulu Tolang Private Middle School, Labuhanbatu Regency

Results data were collected and analyzed from student learning interest questionnaires from each class. Description of students' learning interest in the growth and development of living things with the lowest score, highest score, average score and standard deviation for each class is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics on learning interest.

Grade	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
VII	21	49	80	65.62	9.625
VIII	13	47	74	65.69	10.339
IX	30	42	66	51.60	7.789

Based on Table 5, it can be clearly seen that grade VIII students' interest in learning (65.69) is higher than the average score in class VII (65.62) and class IX (51.60). Students' interest in learning in classes VIII and VII is classified as high and class IX is classified as medium. To make it easier to see the differences in students' learning interests from each class, it can be seen in Figure 2.

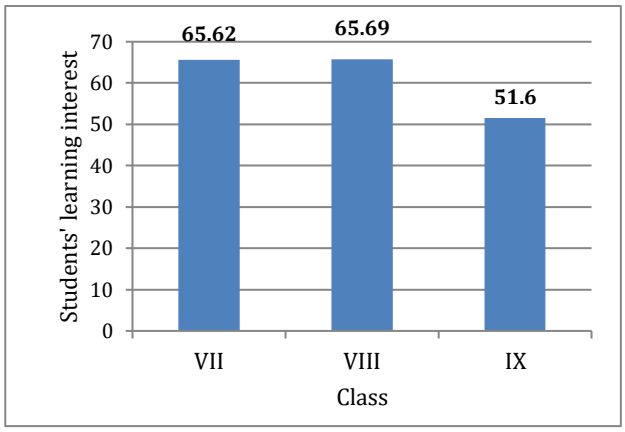

Figure 2. Mean score of students' learning interest in the growth and development of living things at SMPS Bulu Tolang.

Results of student learning interest based on gender

Result data was collected and analyzed from student learning interest questionnaires from each class based on gender. Description of students' learning interest in the growth and development of living things with the lowest score, highest score, average score and standard deviation for each class based on gender summarized in the learning interest of male students (Table 7) and female students (Table 8).

Table 7. Male students' interest in learning.

Male students	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Grade 7th	10	45	64	55.10	7.141
Grade 8th	5	58	66	61.80	3.899
Grade 9th	14	42	51	45.93	2.814
Mean				54,28	

Table 8. Female students' interest in learning.

Female Students	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Grade 7th	11	49	80	63.64	10.810
Grade 8th	8	54	78	67.00	8.992
Grade 9th	16	45	74	65.06	10.841
Mean				65.23	

To make it easier to see differences in students' learning interests based on gender, it can be seen in Figure 3.

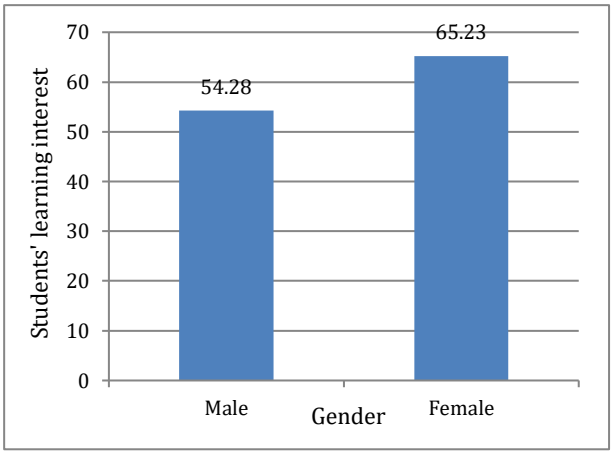

Figure 3. Mean score of students' interest in learning based on gender on the growth and development of living creatures at bulu tolang private middle school.

Based on the diagram in Figure 3 with a total of 64 students at Bulu Tolang Private Middle School based on gender, the average score for female students' interest in learning (65.23) is higher than that of male students (54.28). Female students' interest in learning is in the high category and men's is in the medium category. Male and female students have different psychological states. Female students have greater interest than male students. This difference in interest in learning is influenced by differences in behavior between male and female students. Men's personalities tend to be indifferent, while women's personalities tend to be caring. Therefore, women's interest is higher than men because of their caring nature.

Results of student learning interest based on interest indicators at bulu tolang advent private middle school, Labuhanbatu regency

a. Students' enjoyment in learning

Students' enjoyment in learning is the most important thing for students' interest in learning because if students are not happy then the students have no interest in learning.

Table 9. Indicators of students' enjoyment in learning

No	Item	Score	Description
1	X1	63.75	High
2	X4	56.25	Medium
3	X8	62.18	High
4	X11	57.5	Medium
5	X14	58.75	Medium
Total: 298.43/5 = 59.68			

Knowing the average of each item in the statement indicator, then the total average value of the sub-indicator "students' feelings of enjoyment in participating in learning" is calculated using the grand mean formula. Based on the calculation of these variables, a total average value of 59.68 was obtained (Table 9), so it can be concluded that it is categorized as moderate because it is in the interval 41-60.

b. Students' attention to learning

Students' attention to learning is very important because if students do not pay attention to the learning given by the teacher, it means that students have no interest in learning.

Table 10. Indicators of student attention to learning

No	Item	Score	Description
1	X2	60.93	Medium
2	X10	62.81	Tinggi
3	X12	53.43	Sedang
4	X16	58.43	Sedang
5	X20	59.37	Sedang
Total: 294.97/5 = 58.99			

Knowing the average of each statement indicator item, then the total average value of the sub-indicator "students' attention to learning" is calculated using the mean formula. Based on the data from the item calculations, a total average value of 58.99 was obtained (Table 10) so that it can be concluded that it is categorized as moderate because it is in the interval 41-60.

c. Students' interest in learning

Students' interest in learning also greatly influences students' interest in learning because if students are not interested in learning, then students have no interest in learning.

Table 11. Indicators of student interest in learning

No	Item	Score	Description
1	X6	53.75	Medium
2	X7	55.93	Medium
3	X9	57.18	Medium
4	X17	61.87	High
5	X19	58.43	Medium
Total : 287.16/5 = 57.43			

Knowing the average of each statement indicator item, then the total average value of the sub-indicator "students' interest in learning" is calculated using the grand mean formula. Based on the results of calculating these variables, a total average value of 57.43 was obtained (Table 11) so that it can be concluded that it is categorized as moderate because it is in the interval 41-60.

d. Students' engagement in learning

Student engagement in learning is very important and can also be measured if students are not involved then students have no interest in learning.

Table 12. Indicators of student engagement in learning

No	Item	Score	Description
1	X3	65.93	High
2	X5	60.93	Medium
3	X13	57.18	Medium
4	X15	58.43	Medium
5	X18	58.12	Medium
Total: 300.59/5 = 60.11			

Knowing the average of each statement indicator item, then the total average value of the sub-indicator "students' involvement in learning" is calculated using the grand mean formula. Based on data from the calculation of these variables, a total average value of 60.11 was obtained (Table 12) so that it can be concluded that it is categorized as moderate because it is in the interval 41-60.

To make it easier to see the average value of students' learning interest based on indicators, it can be seen in Figure 4. Based on these data, four indicators of student interest in learning regarding the growth and development of living things are in the medium category overall because all indicators have a value of <61%.

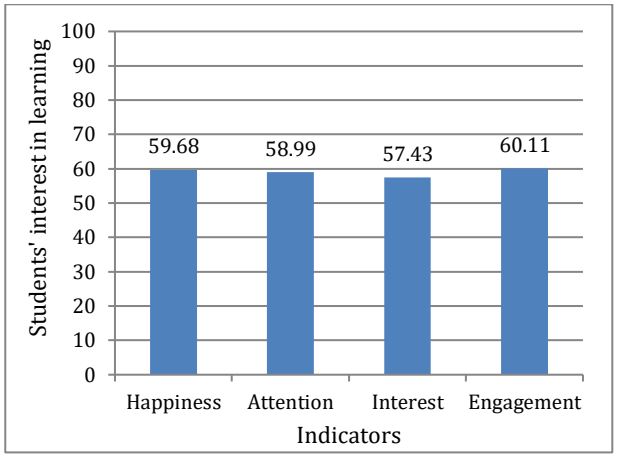

Figure 4. Average value of students' interest in learning based on indicators in the growth and development of living things at Bulu Tolang private middle school.

Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be seen that the indicator of feelings of happiness obtained a medium value of 59.68, the indicator of student attention in the medium category was 58.99, the indicator of interest in the medium category was 57.43 and the indicator of student involvement in learning was in the medium category with a value of 60.11 as the highest indicator among other indicators.

According to the research conducted at Bulu Tolang Private Middle School, female students have a higher interest in learning than male students. The data collected was based on the grades obtained by the students. Additionally, studies have shown that male and female students exhibit different psychological states. Malini & Fridari (2019) revealed that female students have greater motivation than male students. The relationship between gender and interest is influenced by differences in behavior between male and female students. This is in line with Maula & Hidayah (2019) which states that the learning interests of male students and female students are different. Female students have a higher interest in learning than male students. Interests are closely related to a person's personality. Men's personalities tend to be indifferent, while women's personalities tend to be caring. Therefore, women's interest is higher

than men because of their caring nature. Apart from that, female students can also think clearly and their emotions are more visible than male students.

Based on the indicators of student interest in learning which consist of indicators of feelings of happiness, attention, interest and involvement in learning, each indicator has a medium category overall. According to Slameto (2010), Interest is the inclination to pay attention and engage in an activity. Interest in learning has a significant influence on academic achievement. If the learning material is not aligned with students' interests, they may become disinterested and fail to derive satisfaction from the lesson. However, if students feel happy and motivated in learning, then student learning outcomes can improve well. Student involvement in learning is crucial for achieving understanding in learning so that student learning achievement can be better. Research by Fernandez shows indicators of student enjoyment, interest, attention and involvement that students have interests that are categorized as good during the biology learning process. Student involvement in biology subjects is the highest indicator (very good) because when the teacher shows PowerPoint media and there are points in the material that the students don't understand, the students will try to read it repeatedly and ask the teacher (Fernandez et al., 2021).

The presence of an interest in learning can encourage students' curiosity about new things, including learning. In the interviews conducted, the teacher tried to increase students' curiosity by asking questions related to everyday life, so that many students could participate in trying to answer the questions asked by the teacher.

The condition of students' interest in learning in class VIII, especially at Bulu Tolang Private Middle School, regarding the growth and development of living things topic, is that students tend not to understand the lessons due to students' lack of interest in learning. This is in line with Subiakto (2010), a high interest in learning tends to produce high achievement, where as a lack of interest in learning can result in low achievement. Therefore, interest in learning can make a student gain knowledge and achieve an understanding of his knowledge at school so that interest in learning is a very important factor in learning success.

Students' interest in learning at Bulu Tolang Private Middle School has an interest that can be seen from the students' attitudes where students do not want to talk when the teacher asks questions, and some fall asleep when the teacher explains the lesson material. However, female students pay more attention when the teacher explains, and they are more likely to take note of what the teacher says, compared to male students, who are less likely to do so.

The factors behind student learning at the school are internal factors, namely factors that come from the students themselves, characterized by enthusiasm in answering several questions given by the teacher in learning, while external factors are factors that come from outside the individual student, such as the presence of enthusiasm. given by the teacher when a student can answer the teacher's question and the teacher says the answer is "very good", with a sentence like that the student feels cared for so that enthusiasm for learning increases in learning. Interests influence a large part of learning. Without interest, someone will not do something or may do it out of compulsion (Mazer, 2010). Learning will be understood if students have an interest in the subjects they are studying.

Interest is a liking and interest in an activity. The more students are interested in learning biology, the higher their chances of achieving achievement. Good achievement does not only require intelligence, but also requires a growing interest in learning from students (Nesi & Akobiarek, 2018). Interests relate to a person's inner state so that their interpretation will contribute to a person's understanding of the relationships that lead to feelings. In the classroom context, the interests and expectations maintained by teachers and students can indeed influence how the learning process will occur in the classroom.

A person's interest will arise if there is an activity that they like. Students must feel comfortable learning at home. So, this feeling of comfort will give you interest or liking for the biology lesson you are studying. Therefore, intrinsic and extrinsic factors are needed to improve learning achievement. The spirit of support from family and the desire to learn from oneself can create enthusiasm for learning at school.

Serious student involvement in learning occurs because the situations presented are interesting. Powerpoint media has an interesting presentation and stimulates students to find out more information about the material presented. Techniques like this can increase student involvement in learning (Sumantri & Rachmadtullah, 2016).

Learning involves a process of changing behavior. This change includes a change in understanding when at first someone does not understand something, then after the learning process occurs, the person's level of understanding increases or mechanically as a change resulting from experience (Pane & Dasopang, 2017).

The obstacle in observing students' interest in learning at Advant Bulu Tolang Private Middle School is that students in general can absorb Biology lessons well, but the Biology teacher said that the obstacle to studying Biology, especially the growth and development of living things, is that there are students who are lazy and have low absorption capacity based on that data. It can be ascertained that there is a small portion of students who have limitations in absorbing the material quickly, but it is believed that there are still many other students who can absorb Biology lessons well, as the researchers found from the results of the student questionnaire. This is indeed normal in a learning process. Therefore, teachers need to try to increase student interest by finding ways to make learning relevant, authentic and useful in students' lives. Then teachers can use this interest as a natural motivator to increase student involvement in learning (Amjah, 2014).

The teacher's role in the teaching and learning process includes many things, such as teacher, class manager, supervisor, motivator, consular, explorer. All of these roles are the key to teacher success in the teaching and learning process (Dalimunthe et al., 2021). This can increase students' interest in learning with a teacher's enthusiasm for teaching.

CONCLUSION

The average value of students' learning interest in class VIII was 65.69 (high) which was higher than the learning interest of grade VII students which was 65.62 (high) and grade IX which was 51.60 (medium). Based on gender, female students' interest in studying at Bulu Tolang Adventist Private Middle School was 65.23 (high) higher than male students' interest in studying at 54.28 (medium). Then, students' interest in learning in growth and development material based on indicators of learning interest showed that the indicator of feelings of happiness was 59.68 (medium), student attention was 58.99 (medium), student interest was 57.43 (medium), and student involvement was 60.11 (medium).

From the results of this research, it is recommended that biology teachers can explore and apply learning methods that can accommodate students' different learning styles, so that students' interest in learning can increase.

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