
Academic Motivations in Junior High School Refreshing Day

Rafie Djajasoepeña¹, Iwan Setiawan³, Farid Triawan⁴, Anak Agung Ngurah Perwira Redi⁵, Nikolas Krisma⁶, Ilham Prasetyo⁷, Muhammad Johan Alibasa², Wandy Wandy⁸

^{1-3,8}Department of Information Systems, Sampoerna University

^{4,6}Department of Mechanical Engineering, Sampoerna University

⁵Department of Industrial Engineering, Sampoerna University

⁷Department of Computer Science, Sampoerna University

E-mail: rafie.djajasoepeña@sampoernauniversity.ac.id

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Abstract: *Motivation is a crucial factor in education as it stimulates, guides, and channels purposeful behavior driven by biological, emotional, social, and cognitive factors. Motivation can be a key element of a student's achievement. This study explores the role of motivation in academic achievement and describes a community service program undertaken at SMP Negeri 174 Jakarta. This initiative aims to motivate students before their final exams by sharing success stories of effective study habits and providing tips for exam preparation. The community service activities commenced in late March 2024 and concluded in May 2024. The method strategy applied in this community service consists of establishing communication, initial discussion, formal correspondence, community service preparation, activity execution, and article publication. Over 200 participants, consisting of year-9 students, took part in the event, which began in the morning and lasted for two hours, ending before noon. The majority of the resource persons and the organizers were actively involved in the event preparations. The success of this initiative suggests the potential of similar programs to motivate students in the future.*

Introductions

Motivation plays a fundamental role in academics, including sparking, guiding, and directing goal-oriented behavior through biological, emotional, social, and cognitive forces. Commonly, motivation often refers to the reasons behind someone's actions and serves as the driving force behind human behavior (Nadya & Pustika, 2021). Different motivation theories exist, with some emphasizing its quantity while the others emphasizing its quality. Motivation can be high or low in quantity, while its quality depends on whether it comes from internal or

external sources (Kusurkar et al., 2013). Motivation is crucial in determining a student's success. When students are highly motivated to learn, they are more likely to achieve their desired learning outcomes (Kurnia et al., 2024).

Community service initiatives at the junior high school level are crucial in fostering a sense of social responsibility and academic motivation among young students. They provide a practical platform for applying their classroom knowledge to real-world scenarios and addressing needs and challenges. SMP Negeri 174 Jakarta (*SMP Negeri 174 Jakarta - Profil Pelajar Pancasila dan Kegiatan Sekolah*, 2024) is a public high school in Jakarta – Indonesia, where numerous community services have been implemented together with Sampoerna University as Higher Education Tridharma activities (Prasetyo et al., 2023; Sulistyono et al., 2023). The year-9 students in the school were about to take the school final exam, and positive academic motivations were necessary to help them perform their best during the exam period. Based on the initial discussions with the school representatives, it was found that the students might require more intrinsic motives to study before the exam. Therefore, this community service is then conducted prior to the exam date.

This community service aims to explore the diverse impact of community service on junior high school students, particularly in terms of academic motivation. Furthermore, this article served as a repository of best practices and innovative approaches for integrating community service within the educational framework, inspiring educators to create an environment where service and learning are intertwined.

Community Service Methodology

The community service activities at SMP Negeri 174 Jakarta, Kec. Ciracas, Kota Jakarta Timur, began in late March 2024 and concluded in May 2024. Numerous activities were carried out during this community service initiative, ending with the writing of an article for publication in a scholarly journal. This method is similar to our previous community service activities (Rahim et al., 2023). Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the multiple activities undertaken in this community service program.

The first step of communication with the school was established around March 2024, during which the school representatives discussed their needs with the event organizers. It was determined that the school needed resource persons (RPs) to provide academic motivation to the year-9 students before taking their final exams. This event was bundled with morning sports activities and several religious agendas at the mosque. In the second step, initial discussions were held internally among lecturers to find suitable RPs for this event and to decide on the topics to be presented. There was a change of plan where the first two candidates of RPs were replaced with two other candidates due to conflicting commitments. Discussions also included

topics related to academic motivation that would inspire the junior high school students, the duration of the motivation sessions, and the presentation material that needed to be shared.

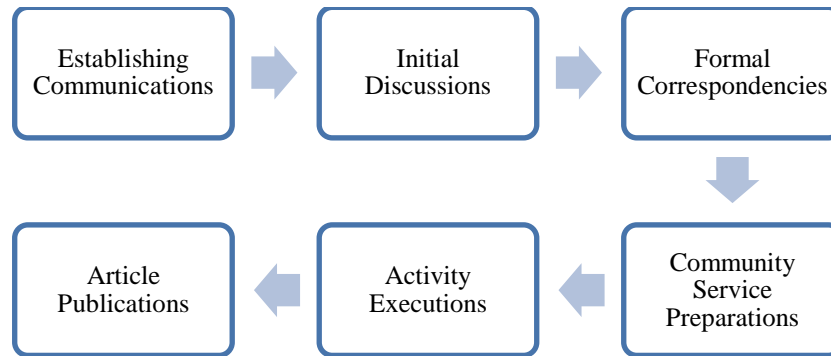


Figure 1. Community Service activity flowchart

Formal communication was then established by the event organizers to support the RPs. A formal softcopy invitation from the school was sent via an instant messaging service. The invitation letter included details about the date, day, time, place, and event topic. The letter was then directly distributed to the RPs. Preparations for the community service involved finalizing presentation slides, reading the RPs' resumes during the event, and arranging personal transportation for ease of mobilization.

The activity execution of the academic motivation event started in the morning of April 19, 2024, and concluded before noon, following weeks of preparation. The activity lasted for approximately two hours from the opening to the closing session, where over 200 students from year-9 participated actively in the event. The event was mainly divided into two sessions each filled with a presentation and sharing from an RP. The two RPs shared their experiences as students, provided academic motivation, discussed the importance of education, and emphasized planning for the future through an educational perspective. The detail of both sessions are described in the following.

The event began with an opening by the MC, followed by a prayer and an introduction to the two RPs through the reading and explanation of their resumes. In the beginning of the agenda, following the opening and introduction, the RPs commenced by reading their resumes. Subsequently, the first RP began to share and provide academic motivation for the students, offering tips and suggestions on exam preparation, such as eating and rest well and other similar advices. The first RP also did a sharing session and provided academic motivation to study better, focus on the study objectives, and reach the dreams of aiming for higher education. Figure 2 illustrates the first RP sharing experiences and motivation during the event.



Figure 2. First session of the event

After completing the first session, the second RP shared his background and experiences studying abroad. He explained the importance of building a strong resume from a young age. By establishing a solid background early on, students can open doors to opportunities for attending prestigious universities and obtaining scholarships to study abroad. His presentation also included motivational insights on why studying abroad can be both enjoyable and highly beneficial for their future. Figure 3 shows the second RP sharing his academic motivation with the participants.



Figure 3. Second Session of the Event

There were also question-and-answer (Q&A) sessions, where students inquired about scholarships and time management strategies. Students who asked questions received souvenirs from the organizers. After these two presentations were completed, the final agenda in the event was to take pictures with all the participants, teachers, staff, and RPs. However, the concluding task of the community service activity involved writing a manuscript intended for submission in a community service journal.

Results and Discussions

More than 200 year-9 students participated in this event, which started in the morning and lasted for two hours following the sports event and prayers. The students demonstrated enthusiasm throughout the event, as shown from their active participation and reactions during the sessions. Teachers and staff of SMP Negeri 174 Jakarta also joined the session to assist with the large number of student participants. Based on the active participation and reactions of the students, the event can be considered satisfactory. Furthermore, the room was adequate to support the event, and both the audio-visual tools used for presentation were excellent. Table 1 provides a detailed overview of each community service activity and their respective statuses.

Tabel. 1 Series of Community Service

Community Service Activities	Status
Estabilishing communications	Achieved
Initial discussions	Achieved
Formal correspondencies	Achieved
Community service preparations	Achieved
Activity executions	Achieved
Article publications	Achieved

Table 1 shows that all primary tasks were completed, indicating a 100 percent completion rate. Roughly half of the activities were conducted offline, while the other half were conducted online. Most of the RPs and organizers actively participated in the preparation. However, we should note that we missed an opportunity to conduct pre-event and post-event surveys to evaluate the impact of the community service. We realize and take note of this for future reference because community service events should consider collecting surveys from participants to evaluate the event's effectiveness. For events with a large number of participants such as what we did here, organizers can sample the surveys to ease data collection. This event was also documented and posted on LinkedIn. Figure 4 shows the closing session of the academic motivation event.

After completing all tasks provided in Table 1, this community service aims to increase students' motivation. Kusrkar et al. (2013) in their study showed that motivation is important to encourage an attitude towards learning and high effort. Based on this study, this attitude will lead to an increase in performance. Therefore, this activity will be able to accommodate the school's needs from the initial discussions to help students achieve good grades.



Figure 4. Documentation with all the participants

Conclusion

This initiatives at SMP Negeri 174 Jakarta successfully delivered a half-day academic motivation session to over 200 year-9 students on April 19, 2024 in time range March-May 2024. The program, combining motivational talks, Q&A, and interactive activities, aimed to foster both social responsibility and academic drive through community service. Moreover, the program demonstrates the potential of community service projects to assist exam preparedness. For the future events, incorporating pre- and post-event surveys to evaluate the impact on academic motivation and exam preparedness would be beneficial, as the surveys will provide valuable feedback and insights for continuous improvement.

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