

Expressions of Curiosity and Academic Achievement of the Students from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds

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Abstract

Curiosity plays important role in encouraging students from low social economic status to achieve high achievement in school. For students with lack of access to learning facilities, curiosity becomes a source of intrinsic motivation to study. Through literature research, this article identifies key points to consider when researching expression of curiosity in students from low social-economic background. Things that must be considered in looking at students' curiosity motives at school through socioeconomic status analysis are ownership of learning facilities and resources, parents' stimulation and feedback on student curiosity at home, as well as parents' stimulation and feedback on student curiosity at home. Curiosity as students' intrinsic motivation in achieving academic achievement should be able to be described in the atmosphere of student learning in class which includes teacher stimulation and feedback, peer learning interactions, as well as student learning actions that characterize interest in learning, learning skills, mastery of learning materials, and student efforts in solve learning problems.

Keywords: curiosity, achievement, low socioeconomic status (SES)

1. INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic status (SES), which relates to level of income and financial security, is one of the most meaningful cultural dimensions in an individual's life, including in academic life. Research shows that SES is often associated with educational progress and student academic achievement (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008), because student achievement is driven by whether or not the conditions experienced by children and their families there, one of which is gaining access to learning facilities. Access to this learning facility is not only a problem for students of low socioeconomic status with their learning achievements, but also with their curiosity.

Another effect of socioeconomic status is also seen in the satisfaction of curiosity. Children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds satisfy their curiosity by finding information through a variety of access to facilities and learning resources, such as books, the internet and educational aids. Whereas children from low socioeconomic status must find other ways to feed their curiosity. A survey conducted by Burgess, Shah, Hough, & Hynynen (2016) of 6200 kindergarten children in the United States, found that curiosity was one of the factors that made students of this low socioeconomic status excel at school. The aspect of curiosity that affects student achievement from low socioeconomic status is the construct of shows eagerness to learn new things, which describes the enthusiasm of students to learn new things at school, where new information they do not get in the home environment. This is the basis for Burgess et al. (2016) argues that children

of low socioeconomic status rely on the power of curiosity as their intrinsic motivation to achieve academic achievement in school.

Curiosity as motivation in the research of Burgess et al. (2016) does not explain deeply about the curiosity motives expressed by students in achieving academic achievement in school. While Silvia (2012) recommends curiosity research that can explain the motives of curious individuals in seeking knowledge more broadly, Litman (2013) adds that curiosity research needs to describe the conditions of expression of individual curiosity. These expressions must represent the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals in the search for knowledge. The scope of curiosity and socioeconomic status is important to study, because we must know how the expressions of curiosity of students from low SSE can motivate themselves to excel at school, so that curiosity is expected to be an investment for students of low SSE to survive in their educational process, and be able to compete with other students to get the opportunity to get an education and a better life in the future.

From the above explanation it can be said that the conditions of student curiosity specifically linking directly to the low socioeconomic status have not been described in detail and in depth. Previous curiosity research topics link curiosity with gender (Raharja, Wibhawa, & Lukas, 2018; Burgess et al., 2016), education level (Raharja et al., 2018), as well as cultural background and social interaction.

Based on the gap of the research studies described above, the question in this article is how the condition of students' curiosity expressions of low socioeconomic status that

achieves at school. This paper aims to review the literature on curiosity and socioeconomic status in identifying important points to consider when examining the expression of curiosity in students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

2. METHOD

Literature research was used in writing this paper, to identify the concept of student curiosity from low socioeconomic status who have achievements in school. The author analyzes several related concepts such as: curiosity and academic achievement; academic achievement and socioeconomic status; and the condition of students' curiosity of low socioeconomic status.

3. CURIOSITY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Curiosity arises as a result of the demands of practical life that encourage individuals to question something in the surrounding environment. James defines curiosity as an impulse that aims to bring about change in better conditions (James, 1950), meaning that there is a desire to understand what we do not know than we know today (Burgess et al., 2016). Then James stressed that impulses in curiosity are instincts, that is, the nature that can lead to actions on the basis of impulse (drive) which conveys to the goal without training (Desmita, 2010; James, 1950; Spielberg & Starr, 1994).

The theory of curiosity was later developed by Berlyne (1954) defining Curiosity as the desire to find and obtain new information. Means when an individual searches for information. Based on the various opinions above, curiosity is the desire to find and know information, knowledge or experience that is not known at this time towards efforts to fill the information, knowledge or experience gap better than before.

Academic achievement is an indicator of the level of knowledge skills acquired by students as a result of training or experience. High academic achievement is not possible without the presence of intelligence but the presence of high intelligence is not a guarantee of high academic performance (Spinath, 2012). Curiosity has a role in increasing academic achievement by motivating individuals to think further about the information received. Students who are curious will be aware of information gaps so that they become motivated to find answers and actively investigate the subject to resolve their curiosity. The role of curiosity as a motivating factor for dynamic inquiry in student learning, guides students to achieve learning achievement (Pluck, Graham & Johnson, 2011)

Curiosity as motivation in improving academic achievement, is associated with biological drives, such as hunger and thirst. Therefore it can be seen why curiosity leads to feelings of deprivation, because curiosity requires a satisfying factor, namely information. Information is also

considered a reward for those who thirst for information. So when the socioeconomic status of people wants to know they will learn a lot, and the social economic status of those who learn a lot will increasingly realize the information gap they feel. Motivation to reduce knowledge gaps is what drives students' needs in mastering learning materials (Litman, 2005).

4. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

One important objective of psychological research on academic achievement is to explain the reasons for differences in education that come along with characteristics which, in essence, have nothing to do with education. One carrier characteristic associated with academic achievement is socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status The socioeconomic status of a person or family indicates their ownership of capital or economic and social resources. Most often socioeconomic status is assessed based on employment, education, or income or a combination of all (Woolfolk, 2009).

Spinath (2012) states that the strength of the relationship between socioeconomic status and academic achievement of children is reported to vary greatly depending on the indicators used to measure socioeconomic status and academic achievement such as children's age, and also the limits on socioeconomic status and achievement investigated. This needs to be considered, because socioeconomic status is not related to children's achievement, such as children from low socioeconomic status show low achievement or vice versa.

The relationship between socioeconomic status and academic achievement is generally regarded as evidence of social injustice and unequal opportunities. Evidence shows that two students, one from a family with low socioeconomic status and the other from a high socioeconomic home, have different opportunities to obtain a higher education degree even if they have the ability to socioeconomic status according to a standardized test. But why is family socioeconomic status associated with children's academic achievement? The way to find answers to these questions is to look behind the socioeconomic status label and find out what factors are known as prerequisites for academic achievement. socioeconomic status itself is only a carrier variable that is associated with other factors which are the actual causes of differences in academic achievement. For example, parents of high socioeconomic status have favorable characteristics in the student's socio-economic learning status such as providing an environment that stimulates and supports learning, so that at the same time, parents of high socioeconomic status have children who are more likely to have aspirations high in learning (Spinath, 2012).

An important finding regarding injustice in the relationship between family's socioeconomic status and children's achievement is that learning resources that students want are not distributed unevenly among families, as well as the reality in society about making decisions in making

educational choices for their children, where it makes the difference bigger. Examples of choices parents make for their children's education, such as the selection of school institutions (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008).

5. THE CONDITION OF STUDENTS' CURIOSITY OF LOW SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Curiosity is basically a nature which is possessed by every individual, there is no individual who does not have curiosity. The curiosity of individuals who are considered low is curiosity that has not yet developed. The development of children's curiosity is influenced a lot by adults and their environment (Hartini, 2018; Kashdan & Steger, 2007; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This means that curiosity depends on who the child is together with, where the child grows up, and what adults do to children in its environment.

The socioeconomic status as one of the child-carrying factors in the environment influences how children express their curiosity. Williamson (2002) states that curiosity must be able to be characterized, both from within and from outside, from within curiosity must characterize whether the information sought is *p* or not *p*. While from the outside, a person's socioeconomic status must characterize it as a desire to seek the truth of information. Burgess et al. (2016) states that students' curiosity expressions of socioeconomic status are higher in the aspect of shows eagerness to learn new things, which describes the students' enthusiastic feelings to learn new things in school. This enthusiasm for learning stems from the desire of students to socio-economic status of various new knowledge information at school, which he cannot get at home, due to limited facilities and stimulation of curiosity from parents. Parental education background as one aspect of students' socioeconomic status determines how parents behave in stimulating and providing feedback to identify gaps in student knowledge.

The desire of students from low socioeconomic status to find new information can be motivated intrinsically or extrinsically. Extrinsically limited learning facilities and parental knowledge at home, making teachers and learning facilities at school as a source of information. While intrinsically the desire of students to find the truth of information solely to complement their current knowledge. Information is a reward of curiosity. So the more students want to know, the more he learns (Berlyne, 1954; Litman, 2005). This is what underlies that curiosity is an aspect of intrinsic motivation that has great potential to improve student learning (Woolfolk, 2017). This means that curiosity leads to a number of actions in learning, such as persisting in completing tasks, interest in mastering material, the need to solve learning problems as one of the ways for him to easily understand a knowledge (Litman, 2013; Raharja et al., 2018).

6. CONCLUSION

Expression of student curiosity must be able to be characterized both from within students through their minds and through student behavior in the search for truth and information integrity. Things that must be considered in looking at students' curiosity motives at school through socioeconomic status analysis are ownership of learning facilities and resources, parents' stimulation and feedback on student curiosity at home, as well as parents' stimulation and feedback on student curiosity at home. curiosity as students' intrinsic motivation in achieving academic achievement should be able to be described in the atmosphere of student learning in class which includes teacher stimulation and feedback, peer learning interactions, as well as student learning actions that characterize interest in learning, learning skills, mastery of learning materials, and student efforts in solve learning problems.

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