




Strengthening Students' Learning Enthusiasm Through Love and Appreciation: A Case Study at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Submitted: April 28, 2026 Final Revised: June 01, 2026 Accepted: June 13, 2026 Published: June 20, 2026</p>	<p>Purpose: Analyzing the strengthening of enthusiasm for learning through providing the need for love and appreciation in overcoming the phenomenon of students not advancing to class at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo during the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Methods: This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. Research subjects included school principals, teachers and students who experienced not being promoted to grade. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis uses data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Findings: The research results show that the phenomenon of not being promoted to grade is influenced by internal and external factors, such as low learning motivation, lack of family support, learning strategies that do not meet students' needs, and students' psychological needs that have not been met. Strengthening the enthusiasm for learning through fulfilling the needs for love and appreciation increase learning participation, self-confidence, discipline and motivation of students. Research Implications: This research has the implication that fulfilling the need for love and appreciation can be a pedagogical strategy in preventing the phenomenon of not being promoted. These findings can also be a reference for schools and teachers in designing learning that is more humane, supportive and centered on students' needs in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Originality: The novelty of this research lies in the focus on strengthening enthusiasm for learning through the perspective of the need for love and appreciation as a strategy to overcome the phenomenon of not being promoted to grade, especially in the context of implementing the Independent Curriculum in vocational high schools.</p>
<p>Keywords: Appreciation; Independent Curriculum; Learning Enthusiasm; Love Needs; Vocational Students.</p>	
	



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INTRODUCTION

Education is a process aimed at optimally developing students' potential through meaningful learning activities. Education not only develops knowledge but also shapes attitudes, character, and skills necessary for life. Educational success is not solely determined by students' cognitive abilities but is also influenced by psychological, social, and environmental factors that support their overall development. According to [Susana \(2022\)](#), one important factor contributing to educational success is students' enthusiasm for learning.

Enthusiasm for learning is an internal drive that encourages students to be active, diligent, and enthusiastic in participating in the learning process. According to [Gumala et al. \(2023\)](#) enthusiasm for learning is a highly influential aspect of learning activities because it can increase student engagement in the learning process. Similarly, [Ikhwandari et al. \(2019\)](#) explain that enthusiasm for learning is closely related to motivation, which influences student participation in learning activities. Students with a strong enthusiasm for learning tend to demonstrate active involvement, discipline, responsibility, and a desire to achieve optimal learning outcomes. Conversely, low enthusiasm for learning can cause students to become passive, lack self-confidence, lack discipline, and experience a decline in academic achievement. This condition can even lead to the phenomenon of failing to advance to a higher grade. According to [Sitorus et al. \(2025\)](#), enthusiasm for learning significantly contributes to academic success because it encourages students to be more diligent, active, and responsible in the learning process.

Low enthusiasm for learning remains a common problem at various levels of education, including Vocational High Schools (SMK). In line with this, according to [Emda \(2018\)](#), low enthusiasm for learning can cause students to be less active in the learning process, thus impacting learning outcomes. According to [Suparman & Junaidin \(2023\)](#), low enthusiasm for learning in students is influenced by various factors, such as family socioeconomic conditions, lack of environmental support, minimal attention to students' psychological needs, and weak learning motivation. These conditions result in low participation in learning, increased absenteeism, lack of academic discipline, and even the phenomenon of students failing to advance to a higher grade. [Putri & Setiawan \(2023\)](#) explains that the phenomenon of failing a grade is not only caused by low academic ability, but is also influenced by factors such as motivation, discipline, psychological well-being, and the social support received by students.

The phenomenon of failing students is a complex educational issue because it is not only related to academic achievement but also to the students' psychological and social well-being. According to [Bariyah et al. \(2023\)](#), low learning motivation and suboptimal learning strategies are among the main causes of students experiencing academic failure. In the context of the Independent Curriculum, teachers are required to create student-centered learning, taking into account both their academic and psychological needs. Therefore, efforts to increase enthusiasm for learning need to be carried out comprehensively through an approach that focuses not only on academic aspects but also on students' emotional and social needs.

The subject of this research is SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo, one of the leading vocational schools in Sidoarjo Regency. Based on school data for the 2023/2024 academic year, 36 students were found to have failed a grade, consisting of 22 students in grade X and 14 students in grade XI. Although in the 2024/2025 academic year, this number decreased to five students, the phenomenon of failing a grade remains a significant concern because it is related to the quality of learning, student development, and the effectiveness of the mentoring program implemented by the school. Initial observations indicate that some students who failed a grade had low attendance rates, were less active in learning, experienced learning difficulties, and demonstrated low enthusiasm for learning. This condition indicates the need for school strategies that focus not only on improving academic achievement but also on meeting students' psychological needs. According to [Farid et al. \(2023\)](#), students who receive adequate psychological support and mentoring from the school environment tend to have higher learning motivation and are able to adapt to academic demands more effectively. According to [Ainun et al. \(2023\)](#) stated that providing reinforcement and appreciation from teachers can increase student motivation and encourage more active involvement in the learning process. Furthermore, according to [Heng et al. \(2023\)](#) students experiencing academic difficulties generally face not only cognitive barriers but also issues with motivation, self-confidence, and social support, which impact their learning success.

One theory that can be used to explain the importance of fulfilling psychological needs in increasing enthusiasm for learning is Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. According to [Khairiyah & Pujiasti \(2026\)](#), human needs are structured in stages, starting with physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Once physiological and safety needs are met, individuals will strive to fulfill their love and esteem needs. According to [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#), love needs encompass the need to be accepted, cared for, loved, and part of a group, while esteem needs relate to the need for recognition, appreciation, respect, and self-confidence.

In the educational context, fulfilling love and esteem needs plays a crucial role in increasing students' enthusiasm for learning. Students who feel accepted, cared for, and appreciated tend to have greater self-confidence and are more motivated to participate in learning. Conversely, students who receive less attention and appreciation tend to experience decreased motivation, lack self-confidence, and give up easily when faced with learning difficulties. According to [Oktavia \(2021\)](#), meeting students' psychological needs is a crucial factor in creating a comfortable learning environment that supports both academic and non-academic development. This opinion is supported by [Susanto \(2022\)](#), who asserts that a humanistic approach to education can help students develop optimally by addressing their emotional and social needs.

Meeting the need for love and appreciation can be achieved through various school strategies, such as personal teacher approaches to students, providing motivation, guidance and counseling services, positive communication, reinforcement, and recognition for student effort and achievement. According to [Damiani et al. \(2024\)](#), the implementation of the Independent Curriculum provides schools with greater scope to implement student-centered learning, thereby addressing students' social and emotional needs. Through this approach, students are expected to feel accepted, valued, and develop greater self-confidence in the learning process.

Previous research conducted by [Oktavia \(2021\)](#) on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and its relevance to students' learning needs showed that physiological, safety, belonging, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs can be met through learning strategies tailored to their needs. However, this research was still conceptual and did not specifically address the phenomenon of student failure in vocational schools. Another study by [Aiman et al. \(2022\)](#) on Abraham Maslow's humanistic perspective on student character development focused on character formation and did

not examine the relationship between fulfilling love and esteem needs and the learning motivation of students experiencing academic failure. Meanwhile, [Santosa et al. \(2016\)](#) explained that failure to advance to a grade is influenced not only by academic factors but also by psychosocial factors such as low learning motivation and lack of emotional support. These findings are supported by [Annisa & Abadi \(2023\)](#), who explained that low self-confidence in students can affect their ability to face learning challenges, resulting in decreased motivation and academic achievement.

Based on this previous research review, there are still limited studies specifically examining the relationship between fulfilling the need for love and appreciation and strengthening the learning spirit of students who have failed a grade in vocational high schools during the Independent Curriculum era. Therefore, this study is novel because it focuses on school strategies for fulfilling the need for love and appreciation as an effort to strengthen the learning spirit of students who have failed a grade at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the factors that influence the causes of the phenomenon of failing to advance to a higher grade among students at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo and describes the strengthening of learning enthusiasm through fulfilling the needs for love and appreciation. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions in the development of educational studies based on Abraham Maslow's theory of needs and provide practical recommendations for schools in designing effective strategies to increase students' learning enthusiasm and reduce the number of failing to advance to a higher grade.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study approach. This approach was used to deeply understand the phenomenon of strengthening students' enthusiasm for learning through fulfilling their needs for love and appreciation in a natural school context. The research location was SMK Negeri 3 Buduran, Sidoarjo. The research subjects included the principal, teachers, homeroom teachers, and students who had failed a grade.

Data collection techniques included:

1. Observation to obtain data on student learning behavior and school strategies.
2. In-depth interviews with research informants.
3. Documentation in the form of school data, academic archives, and supporting research documents.

Data validity was tested using source triangulation and technical triangulation. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. According to [Poth & Shannon-Baker \(2022\)](#), qualitative research uses purposive sampling, which selects informants based on specific considerations, those deemed most knowledgeable about the research phenomenon.

In this study, informants included the principal, curriculum vice principal, guidance counselor, homeroom teacher, subject teachers, and students who had been failed in grades 10 and 11 at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo. The students selected as informants were those with grades below the Minimum Competency (KKM), low attendance rates, inactivity in learning, and decreased enthusiasm for learning, based on observations by teachers and homeroom teachers.

In this study, initial observations were conducted on July 4, 2025, and indicated that students were not diligent in completing assignments, had learning difficulties, lacked interest in learning, and disliked solving problems. According to [Gear et al. \(2018\)](#), qualitative research must explain the research implementation time, data collection techniques, and the interaction process between the researcher and informants to ensure credibility.

Data collection was conducted from July to September 2025 through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, homeroom teachers, and students to obtain information on the causes of low learning motivation, forms of teacher emotional support, school strategies for addressing students at risk of failing a grade, and the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the school.

According to [Fadli \(2021\)](#), data validity in qualitative research can be achieved through source triangulation, technical triangulation, member checking, and peer discussions. In this study, source triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of interviews with the principal, guidance counselor, homeroom teacher, subject teachers, and students. Meanwhile, technical triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. Furthermore, member checking was conducted to ensure that the interview results align with the research informants' intentions. Peer discussions were also conducted to reduce researcher subjectivity in the data analysis process.

According to [Sale \(2022\)](#) qualitative data analysis is conducted through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In this study, the data reduction process involved grouping interview and observation results based on themes such as enthusiasm for learning, need for affection, appreciation, teacher support,

and factors contributing to grade failure. The data was then categorized to identify patterns of relationships between research themes, allowing for a more in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon under study.

RESULTS

Based on the research documentation, data on students with scores below the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM) were obtained as follows:

Table 1. List Of Student With Total Grades Below KKM

Nu.	Informant	Grade Level	Total Grades < KKM
1.	S1	X	11
2.	S2	X	9
3.	S3	X	8
4.	S4	X	8
5.	S5	X	7
6.	S6	XI	8
7.	S7	XI	All Subjects
8.	S8	XI	8
9.	S9	XI	11
10.	S10	XI	7
11.	S11	XI	9

These data indicate that students at risk of failing a grade tend to have a relatively high number of subjects below the Minimum Competency (KKM). Interviews revealed that this condition correlates with low learning motivation, lack of discipline, and weak learning support from the family environment. In addition to academic data, the following interview data was obtained:

Table 2. Interview Results Table

Nu.	Finding Aspect	Learning Level	Interview Finding Summary
1.	Learning motivation	Class X	Some students experienced a decrease in learning
2.	Family support	Class X	Not yet optimal for several informants
3.	Teacher-student relationship	Class X	Increased after mentoring
4.	Learning appreciation	Class X	Affects student self-confidence
5.	Discipline	Class X	Experienced an increase after intervention
6.	Learning motivation	Class XI	Continued challenge; some decline noted
7.	Family support	Class XI	Variable; some very supportive, others minimal
8.	Teacher-student relationship	Class XI	Stronger connections made through guidance
9.	Learning appreciation	Class XI	Boosts self-efficacy; more recognition is needed
10.	Discipline	Class XI	Mixed improvements; some areas still need work.
11.	Overall Progress	Class XI	Moderate; focus on intervention effectiveness

Observations showed that after strategies to meet the need for affection and appreciation were implemented, student attendance, learning participation, and assignment completion increased.

Factors Causing the Phenomenon of Failing to Advance

The research results indicate that the phenomenon of failing to advance to a grade is influenced by various internal and external factors. Internal factors include low learning motivation, lack of self-confidence, boredom with learning, and low student discipline. Some students showed a lack of active learning, failed to complete assignments on time, and showed low involvement in learning activities. External factors include a lack of family support, social environment, suboptimal learning strategies, and adaptation to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Some students received insufficient attention and learning support from their families, which resulted in low learning enthusiasm.

Table 3. Causative facto

Causal Factors	Percentage
Lack Of Affection	40%
Lack Of Appreciation	30%
Low Self Confidence	30%

The table depicting the causal factors of a problem, specifically those related to student achievement. The diagram above shows the Causal Factors and displays three main categories that contribute to the problem being studied. The largest factor in the diagram is Lack of Affection, with a percentage of 40%. This indicates that emotional factors from the family environment have the most dominant influence on student achievement. A lack of attention, care, and support from parents can directly impact a child's enthusiasm for learning. Furthermore, two other factors have similar percentages: Lack of Appreciation and Low Self-Confidence, each at 30%. Both factors have a significant and nearly equal influence on student achievement. The Lack of Appreciation factor indicates that students rarely receive appreciation for their efforts or achievements. When students do not receive recognition, either from teachers or peers, they tend to feel unappreciated and lose motivation to improve. Meanwhile, Low Self-Confidence indicates a psychological state of students who feel inadequate or doubt their own abilities. This can hinder active participation in learning, such as asking questions, answering questions, or trying new things. When viewed as a whole, this diagram confirms that internal and external factors are interconnected. Lack of affection can trigger low self-esteem, while lack of recognition can reinforce feelings of worthlessness in students. The lack of affection factor, which accounts for 40% of students' academic development, indicates that families play a crucial role in supporting children's academic development. A less harmonious or less attentive family environment can negatively impact student behavior and learning outcomes. School factors are also crucial, particularly in terms of recognition. Teachers play a strategic role in building student motivation through praise, positive reinforcement, and attention to individual student development.

Fulfilling the Need for Affection in Strengthening the Spirit of Learning

According to [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#), the need for affection is an individual's need for attention, acceptance, a sense of belonging, and positive social relationships with others. Fulfilling the need for affection helps individuals feel emotionally secure, enabling them to optimally develop their potential. In an educational context, students who receive attention and support from teachers and the school environment tend to have a better learning motivation.

Schools fulfill the need for affection through a personal approach from teachers to students, intensive guidance, training, counseling services, and positive interpersonal relationships. Teachers strive to address students' learning difficulties, create a comfortable learning environment, and involve students in collaborative activities. These strategies help students feel accepted, cared for, and supported. This finding aligns with [Emeralda & Kristiana \(2017\)](#) findings, which state that social support received by students can increase learning motivation and help them cope with various academic demands. Furthermore, [Raharja \(2023\)](#) explain that social support has a positive relationship with learning motivation because it can increase student engagement and enthusiasm in participating in the learning process.

Fulfilling the Need for Appreciation in Strengthening the Spirit of Learning

According to [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#), the need for esteem is an individual's need for recognition, appreciation, respect, and self-confidence. Fulfilling esteem needs will help individuals feel competent and valued, thereby increasing motivation to achieve desired goals. In educational settings, rewards given by teachers and schools can encourage students to be more confident and enthusiastic about learning. Fulfilling esteem needs is achieved through appreciation, positive reinforcement, recognition of student effort, and the assignment of responsibilities that build self-confidence. Awards are not only given for academic achievement, but also for behavioral development, discipline, and student learning participation. This finding is supported by [Ainun et al. \(2023\)](#), who stated that consistent reinforcement and appreciation can increase student learning motivation. This opinion is supported by [Wijaya et al. \(2023\)](#) who explained that support, appreciation, and attention from the surrounding environment have a positive influence on students' learning motivation.

Impact of the Strategy for Strengthening Learning Motivation

Data on the Impact of Strategy Implementation. Changes in student conditions before and after the intervention are depicted in the following table.

Table 4. Comparing Aspects Of Education Before Intervention Vs After Intervention

Nu.	Before Intervention	After Intervention
1.	Confidence (Low)	Confidence (Better)
2.	Lateness (Frequent Lateness)	Lateness (More Timely)
3.	Attendance (Low)	Attendance (Increased)
4.	Motivation (Low)	Motivation (Increased)
5.	Participation (Passive)	Participation (Active)

The findings revealed that several students perceived a lack of attention and appreciation from both their families and the school environment. Interview data indicated that some students rarely received parental attention because of their

parents' demanding work schedules. Consequently, they felt less motivated to study at home. Some students also felt overlooked by their teachers because they were perceived as undisciplined. This experience made them increasingly reluctant to participate in classroom activities. These conditions are reflected in the following interview excerpts:

"I actually want to learn, but sometimes I feel unnoticed and rarely appreciated, even though I have tried." (S1)

"When I am frequently compared with other students, I become reluctant to attend class because I feel that I am not good enough." (S2)

"An emotional approach is very important. When students receive attention and appreciation, they become more open and regain their enthusiasm for learning." (Homeroom Teacher)

These findings are consistent with [Miladiyah et al. \(2023\)](#), who emphasize that attention and appreciation are important factors in strengthening students' learning motivation. Students who receive adequate emotional support tend to demonstrate greater self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

Following the implementation of strategies aimed at fulfilling students' needs for affection and appreciation, several positive changes were observed. Students showed greater motivation, more active participation in classroom activities, improved self-confidence, better discipline, and less passive learning behavior. These changes suggest that providing emotional support, positive reinforcement, and recognition of students' efforts may contribute to strengthening their enthusiasm for learning. In the longer term, such strategies may also help reduce the risk of students failing to advance to the next grade.

DISCUSSION

Discussion of Factors Causing Failure to Promote a Grade

The phenomenon of students failing to advance to a grade in this study demonstrates that academic failure is a multidimensional problem. Failure to advance to a grade is not solely caused by low academic achievement, but is also influenced by learning motivation, family support, the social environment, teacher learning strategies, and the fulfillment of students' psychological needs. This finding aligns with [Wijaya et al. \(2023\)](#) hierarchy of needs theory, which explains that individual behavior, including learning behavior, is influenced by the fulfillment of basic needs that support development and self-actualization.

Furthermore [Farid et al. \(2023\)](#) explain that psychological factors play a crucial role in determining the success of the learning process because they influence students' motivation, self-confidence, readiness to learn, and ability to face academic challenges. Based on interviews, low learning motivation is the dominant factor causing students to fail to advance to a grade. Students with low learning motivation tend to be passive, lack focus in learning, often procrastinate, and exhibit low learning discipline. This finding aligns [Sitorus et al. \(2025\)](#), who explained that learning motivation has a positive relationship with academic achievement because it encourages students to be more active, diligent, and responsible in the learning process.

In addition to internal motivation, family support is also a factor influencing student learning success. Several informants revealed that a lack of attention, supervision, and learning support from family members led to a decline in students' enthusiasm for learning. This finding aligns with [Pramana & Wilani, 2018](#), who explained that social support has a positive relationship with student learning motivation. This opinion is reinforced by [Raharja \(2023\)](#), who explained that social support plays a significant role in student learning motivation. The greater the support students receive from their environment, the higher their motivation and engagement in the learning process.

Teachers' learning strategies also influence student learning success. Research results show that a more personalized, communicative, and supportive learning approach can increase student engagement in the learning process. These findings are supported by [Daheri et al. \(2023\)](#), who explain that teachers act as guides, facilitators, and motivators in increasing students' learning motivation. Furthermore, [Heng et al. \(2023\)](#) explain that psychological support through psychoeducational activities can increase students' learning motivation by helping them understand learning goals and develop self-confidence.

Discussion on Fulfilling the Need for Affection

In this study, the fulfillment of the need for affection is realized through a positive relationship between teachers and students. Teachers not only act as transmitters of learning materials but also as guides, companions, and providers of emotional support. According to [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#), the need for affection is an individual's need for attention, acceptance, a sense of belonging, and positive social relationships with others.

The results of this study indicate that teacher attention through a personal approach, good communication, tutoring, and concern for students' difficulties can increase students' learning comfort and enthusiasm. This finding aligns with [Raharja \(2023\)](#), who explained that social support has a positive relationship with learning motivation because it can increase student engagement in learning. Furthermore [Heng et al. \(2023\)](#) explained that a supportive learning environment and positive interpersonal relationships can increase learning motivation and help students develop better social and emotional skills.

Discussion on Fulfilling Esteem Needs

The need for esteem is an important component in strengthening enthusiasm for learning. The forms of appreciation found in this study included not only formal rewards, but also verbal appreciation, positive reinforcement, and recognition of student progress. [Wijaya et al. \(2023\)](#) stated that esteem needs are related to self-esteem, recognition, competence, and a sense of worth. When students receive appreciation, intrinsic motivation arises to maintain their learning performance. Research findings show that students become more confident after receiving positive reinforcement from teachers. This finding aligns with [Bariyah et al. \(2023\)](#) who stated that teachers' strategies for providing appreciation can increase enthusiasm for learning. Giving appreciation also strengthens a positive learning culture in schools. Positive reinforcement encourages students to be more disciplined, responsible, and achievement-oriented.

Independent Curriculum Discussion

Esteem needs are an important component in strengthening students' enthusiasm for learning. According to [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#), esteem needs relate to the need for recognition, appreciation, respect, self-confidence, and belief in one's abilities. The results of this study indicate that the forms of appreciation provided by schools include not only formal awards but also verbal appreciation, positive reinforcement, recognition of student effort, and the assignment of responsibilities, which can increase self-confidence. This finding aligns with [Ainun et al. \(2023\)](#), who stated that providing consistent reinforcement can increase student learning motivation. Furthermore, [Asiyah et al. \(2023\)](#) explained that self-confidence influences student engagement in learning. Students with high levels of self-confidence tend to be more active in asking questions, expressing their opinions, and completing assignments better.

Research Implications

This research has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the research findings reinforce the relevance of Maslow's theory of needs in the educational context, particularly in strengthening the spirit of learning. Practically, schools can utilize the fulfillment of the need for love and esteem as an intervention strategy to address the risk of failing a grade. Teachers need to integrate psychological support into learning, not solely focusing on academic achievement. Thus, strengthening the spirit of learning based on a humanistic approach can be a relevant educational model in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

Research findings indicate that the phenomenon of failing a grade is not solely related to low academic ability, but is influenced by various psychological and social aspects of students. This aligns with Maslow's theory that the need for love and esteem is a crucial factor in the development of individual motivation. Fulfilling the need for love through teacher attention, mentoring, and emotional support has been shown to strengthen student engagement in learning. When students feel accepted and supported, they experience a sense of psychological security that fosters a passion for learning.

These findings demonstrate that teachers act not only as learning facilitators but also as supportive figures capable of building positive emotional relationships with students. Furthermore, the need for esteem also plays a significant role in increasing learning motivation. Recognizing student effort, providing appreciation, and positive reinforcement fosters self-confidence and intrinsic motivation.

From the perspective of the Independent Curriculum, this strategy is relevant because learning is oriented towards student needs and the holistic development of potential. The research also shows that fulfilling the need for love and esteem is a preventative strategy against failing a grade. This approach not only resolves academic problems but also addresses the root of students' psychological issues. Thus, strengthening the enthusiasm for learning through fulfilling the need for love and appreciation can be seen as a humanistic, relevant, and effective educational strategy in supporting students' learning success.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of failing to advance to a higher grade at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran Sidoarjo is influenced by internal and external factors, including low learning motivation, lack of family support, suboptimal learning strategies, and unmet psychological needs of students. Strengthening the spirit of

learning is achieved by fulfilling the need for love in the form of attention, mentoring, and emotional support, as well as the need for esteem through appreciation, positive reinforcement, and recognition of students' potential. This strategy increase student motivation, learning participation, self-confidence, and discipline and contribute to reducing the phenomenon of failing to advance to a higher grade.

Conclusion Research Limitations

According to Gear et al. (2018), qualitative research needs to explain its limitations so that readers understand the limits of generalizability of the research results. This study has several limitations that must be considered to ensure a fair understanding of the results. First, this study was conducted only at SMK Negeri 3 Buduran, so the results cannot necessarily be generalized to other schools with different conditions and characteristics. Second, this study used a qualitative approach using interview techniques, so the data obtained depended heavily on the openness and honesty of the informants in providing answers. This allowed for subjectivity in the delivery of information during the research process. Third, this study focused on strategies for increasing learning enthusiasm through a compassionate and respectful approach for students who failed a grade. Therefore, other factors such as family economic conditions, social environment, and students' academic abilities were not specifically discussed in depth. Fourth, the limited timeframe for the study prevented the researcher from conducting long-term observations of the development of students' learning enthusiasm after the implementation of the compassionate and respectful approach. Therefore, the long-term impact of this strategy cannot be fully understood. Fifth, the research informants only focused on the principal, curriculum vice principal, guidance counselor, homeroom teacher, subject teachers and all students who failed to advance to the next grade at the school, so that the research results more closely describe the experiences and conditions of students who experienced academic failure, and do not yet include the views of other students who did not fail to advance to the next grade.

Research Recommendations

Based on the research findings, schools need to develop special mentoring programs for students at risk of failing a grade through emotional approaches and appreciation-based learning strategies. Teachers also need to increase their attention to students' psychological well-being and implement more humanistic learning in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. Furthermore, collaboration between schools and parents needs to be strengthened to regularly monitor student attendance, discipline, and assignment completion.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

RS: conceptualization, data collection, analysis, writing, and editing of the manuscript.

RU, OJ, and SM: Guiding, directing, and approving the study.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors declare that this research was conceived, researched, written, and edited without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques

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