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The Influence of Implementing Varied Teaching Methods on Students' Interest in Studying Christian Religious Education

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Abstract

This study aims to find out how much influence the Variation of Learning Method (X) on Student Learning Interest (Y) in the subject of Christian Religious Education at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya. This study uses a quantitative approach with an ex post facto type of research. The research population is all Grade VII students who are Christians at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya for the 2025/2026 Academic Year which totals 186 students, spread over 11 study groups. A minimum sample of 100 students was set using the proportional random sampling technique with the formula ni = (Ni/N) × n. The questionnaire was distributed to 120 students to anticipate incomplete data, and after listwise deletion, the number of data analyzed was 119 respondents. Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (normality test, linearity test, Pearson and Spearman Product Moment correlation test, simple linear regression analysis, determination coefficient test, and t test) with the help of the SPSS Version 27 program. The results showed that the score of Learning Method Variation (calculated from 22 valid items) was in the high category (98.32%) with an average of 71.68, while the Student Learning Interest (calculated from 24 valid items) was in the high (59.66%) and medium (40.34%) categories with an average of 74.06. The Pearson correlation test resulted in r = 0.165 with Sig. = 0.073, insignificant at the level of 5%. The regression equation $\hat{Y} = 59.12 + 0.21X$ with $R^2 = 0.0272$ (contribution of 2.72%). The value of t calculated (1.8093) is smaller than the t of the table (1.9804), so H0 is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant influence between the two variables, although the relationship is positive.

Keywords Christian Religious Education, Students' Learning Interests, Variety of Learning Methods.

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INTRODUCTION

Christian Religious Education (PAK) functions as an important foundation in the formation of students' character, faith, and morals. In particular, PAK intends to equip students with Christian values that can guide them in living their daily lives with integrity and good ethics (Nainggolan, 2015). In this context, Christian moral and ethical education is the main pillar in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors, in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ which emphasizes love, justice, and understanding.

In order for the goals of PAK to be achieved effectively, it is important to create learning methods that are attractive and able to trigger students' interest in learning. Constructivist learning theory explains that students' active involvement in the learning process is an important factor in increasing their motivation and understanding of the material (Suparman, 2014). Interactive methods such as the use of visual media, discussions, and stories can strengthen students' understanding of the Christian values taught (Tampubolon, 2013). In the following regards, teachers play the role of facilitators who not only transfer knowledge, but also educate students to understand and apply these values in their daily lives (Darmawan et al., 2023).

Students' learning interests are crucial in learning PAK, where students who have a high interest tend to be more enthusiastic and active in learning. The following matters are in line with constructivist learning theory which emphasizes the importance of student involvement in the learning process (Pandie et al., 2022). Research has found that when students are given space to explore and explore Christian values through useful interactions, they will more easily understand and internalize the material given (Siahaan, 2016). Therefore, teachers must be able to position themselves as mentors and motivators who help students find the meaning of their learning. Engaging learning and high interest in learning will be the main drivers in achieving the success of this education, so that PAK can make a significant contribution to the development of students' character and faith in the future (Zega et al., 2024).

The problem of students' interest in learning in the field is often a challenge that educators must face. Based on interviews with PAK teachers, several main obstacles were found that affect students' concentration and motivation, especially in the final hours of lessons. Indeed, students often indicate a lack of attention when the learning method applied only focuses on lectures and is teacher-centered (Dores et al., 2019). The following can lead to boredom, passivity, and low motivation. The limitations of learning facilities also add to the difficulty in creating an interesting learning atmosphere (Haswinda et al., 2018).

Meanwhile, interviews with Vll students who are Christians provide a deeper picture of their preferences. Students prefer learning methods that involve practice, discussion, and games rather than monotonous lectures. The boredom they experience is also exacerbated when learning relies only on textbooks (Sanjaya, 2016). Increasing student interest seems to occur when there are interactive elements, such as games, questions and answers, or concrete examples of the material being taught. The following is expressed in research that indicates that teaching that applies varied media, including creative approaches such as Problem-Based Learning and the use of technology, has a positive impact on learning interest. Overall, this condition indicates that the high interest in learning is closely related to the methods applied and the learning environment provided (Karisma et al., 2022).

The gap between engaging learning expectations and field practice indicates that lecture methods still dominate the educational process, while students' expectations want a more varied and interactive learning experience. Many schools still adopt teacher-centered learning methods, while modern education theory asserts that learning variations such as discussions,

practices, games, and inquiry approaches can significantly increase student engagement and motivation (Joyce, Weil, & Calhoun, 2009).

Despite the general understanding of the importance of variation in learning methods, researchers still emphasize the need for empirical evidence to ensure that the implementation of such variations has a significant impact on students' learning interests, especially in the context of Christian Religious Education (PAK). In order to foster a higher interest in learning, education must integrate approaches that encourage students to actively engage in the learning process. Research indicates that when teaching is carried out in a more engaging and interactive method, students tend to be more active, participate, and ultimately improve their academic achievement.

To overcome this gap, teaching strategies need to be optimized by implementing active learning models, such as Problem-Based Learning or Collaborative Teaching that allow students to work in groups and support each other in learning (Liu, 2023). This method not only focuses on mastery of the material but also builds students' critical and creative skills in solving real problems they face in the field. The following are especially important in the context of Christian Religious Education, where students are not only taught to understand religious doctrines but also how to apply them in practical daily life.

The existence of empirical data indicating the significant influence of varied methods on students' learning interests in PAK will be an important contribution to the development of education. It is hoped that the continuity of research in the following areas can pave the way for innovation in teaching approaches and help teachers understand how best to meet the learning needs of their students (Duresa, 2024).

Engaging and varied learning methods also provide opportunities for students to actively participate in the classroom. When students engage in discussions or practices, they not only receive information, but are also able to integrate their knowledge with relevant experiences, which helps in deepening their understanding of the material. Thus, variations in teaching approaches can enhance the overall learning experience, creating an environment that supports collaboration and interactivity.

The diversity of learning methods also allows teachers to adapt to the diverse learning styles of students. As described in the literature, there are different ways in which students absorb and process information, and it is important for education to actively accommodate these differences. In the context of Christian Religious Learning, for example, approaches that involve elements of discussion as well as practical experience can help students understand the application of religious teachings in their daily lives (Achamrah, 2022).

Further research is needed to empirically examine the impact of these constructive variables on students' interest in learning. Through differentiated learning and the use of interactive methods, education systems can better meet students' needs, expectations, and preferences, which in turn can help reduce dropout rates and improve academic outcomes (Inayat & Ali, 2020). Therefore, it is important for educators to consider varied teaching strategies as a step to ensure that every student has an effective and fulfilling learning

experience. Thus, success and achievement in education can be improved, helping students reach their full potential in both academic and personal aspects.

Research that examines the influence of learning method variations on students' learning interest in Christian Religious Education (PAK) subjects is very important considering that there have not been many specific studies that have explored this topic. With the increasing need for effective and engaging learning, there is an impetus to explore how different methods can positively change student learning dynamics. Variations in learning methods are not just an interesting moment, but are also the key to facilitating a more in-depth and meaningful learning process.

The results of the following research are expected to provide strong empirical evidence on the effectiveness of different learning methods. Approaches such as discussion, practice, games, and inquiry methods often indicate better results in increasing students' interest in learning than traditional and monotonous lecture methods. Ensuring that there is empirical support for the effectiveness of these methods will greatly contribute to the development of practice-oriented educational theory. Thus, the following research is not only feasible, but also essential to contribute constructive thinking to the world of education, especially in religious education which is often less attractive to students.

METHODS

The research method used in writing this study is quantitative. The population in the following research is all students of Class VII who are Christians at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya for the 2025/2026 academic year, which totals 186 students and is spread across 11 study groups (Classes VII-1 to VII-11). The sampling technique applied in the following research is *proportional random sampling* (Sugiyono, 2017:64). The determination of the minimum number of samples in the following research is set at 100 students from a population of 186 students. The number of samples in each class is calculated using a proportional allocation formula. Thus, the number of samples planned in the following research is 120 students, provided that the number of data that is eligible for analysis (after incomplete data is issued) must not be less than the minimum number of samples set, which is 100 respondents.

The technique in data collection is in the form of distributing questionnaires. The following research was carried out at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya, which is located at Jalan Temanggung Tilung No.58, Menteng Village, Jekan Raya District, Palangka Raya City, Central Kalimantan Province, the research was focused on Grade VII students who are Christians in the school, especially on the learning of Christian Religious Education (PAK) subjects. The presentation of descriptive analysis data through tables, calculations of modes, medians, means, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis, minimum and maximum values. This test was carried out by applying the assistance of the SPSS Version 27 program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Variation Conditions of Learning Methods (X)

The descriptive results indicate that the Learning Method Variation (X) score, which is

calculated from 22 valid items after items number 5, 14, and 20 are issued, is in the range of 64 to 84 with an average of 71.68 (81.46% of the ideal score) and a standard deviation of 4.70. This relatively small standard deviation value indicates that students' perception of the application of learning method variations by teachers tends to be homogeneous, namely concentrated in the high category. The following is strengthened by the distribution of categories, where 98.32% of respondents are in the high category and only 1.68% in the medium category, without any respondents in the low category.

This condition illustrates that in general, Christian Religious Education teachers at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya have applied a variety of learning methods consistently and are perceived positively by almost all students. However, the high score in almost all respondents at the same time indicates the narrow distribution (variability) of data on this variable, a condition that needs to be considered in interpreting the results of the relationship analysis in the next discussion.

Student Learning Interest Condition (Y)

The Student Learning Interest Score (Y), which is calculated from 24 valid items after item number 10 is issued, moves from 65 to 94 with an average of 74.06 (77.14% of the ideal score) and a standard deviation of 5.94. Compared to variable X, the distribution of variable Y scores appears to be more varied, which is also reflected in the distribution of categories, namely 59.66% of respondents in the high category and 40.34% in the medium category.

This condition indicates that although in general students' interest in learning the subject of Christian Religious Education is relatively good, the variation in interest between students is much higher than the variation in their perception of the learning method applied by the teacher. In other words, almost all students feel the same high level of variation in methods, but their level of interest in learning is not uniform. The difference in distribution pattern between these two variables is one of the early indications that factors other than method variations also play a major role in shaping students' interest in learning.

Results of Each Variable Indicator X and Y

In the variable Variation of Learning Methods, all five indicators were in the high category, with the indicator of the Use of Various Methods in Learning obtaining the highest percentage (83.56%) and the indicator of Meeting the Needs and Learning Preferences of Diverse Students obtaining the lowest percentage (79.67%). These findings indicate that teachers are relatively superior in presenting a diversity of methods in general, but are not fully optimal in adapting methods to different individual needs and learning styles of students.

In the Student Learning Interest variable, after item number 10 was removed from the Attention/Concentration While Learning indicator, all five indicators are now in the high category. The Interest/Curiosity indicator obtained the highest percentage (78.28%), while the Happiness indicator obtained the lowest percentage (76.13%), although the percentage difference between the indicators was relatively thin (76.13%-78.28%). This pattern indicates that the affective aspects of students' learning interests, such as interest, attention/concentration, motivation, feelings of pleasure, and active involvement, are generally relatively evenly distributed and relatively good, without any indicators that stand out as weak points.

Relationship/Effect of the Application of Variation of Learning Methods on Students' Learning Interests

Before the relationship test was performed, the analysis prerequisite test indicated that the data of the X variable, the Y variable, and the regression residual were not normally

distributed, while the relationship between the two variables was declared linear (the Sig. Deviation from Linearity value was 0.148, the height of 0.05). The Pearson Product Moment correlation test yielded a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.165 with a Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.073, which means that the correlation is not significant at the level of 5%. As a non-parametric comparator, considering that the data is not normally distributed, the Spearman correlation test yielded a coefficient (rho) of 0.079 with a Sig. of 0.393, which also confirms the absence of a significant correlation.

The results of simple linear regression analysis produced the equation $\hat{Y} = 59.12 + 0.21X$ with a determination coefficient (R^2) of 0.0272, while the t-test on the regression coefficient produced a calculated t of 1.8093, a low of the t table of 1.9804 (df = 117, $\alpha = 0.05$, two sides), with a Sig. of 0.073. Based on the overall results, it can be stated that although the direction of the relationship between the Variation of Learning Methods and Students' Learning Interests is positive, the strength of the relationship is very weak and not statistically significant at the level of significance of 5%. Thus, there is no significant influence of the application of Variation in Learning Methods to Students' Learning Interests in the subject of Christian Religious Education at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya.

Meaning of Correlation Values

The value of the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.165 is in the category of very low/weak correlation when referring to the commonly applied correlation coefficient interpretation guideline, which places the range of 0.00-0.199 as a very low category. A positive value in this coefficient indicates a tendency towards a unidirectional relationship, namely the higher the variation in learning methods perceived by students, the higher the tendency to learn interests, but the strength of the relationship is so weak that it cannot be used as a basis to conclude that there is a statistically meaningful relationship.

The value of the Spearman correlation coefficient, which is also low (0.079) and insignificant (Sig. 0.393), further confirms that the weak relationship between the two variables is not only due to a violation of the assumption of data normality, but is consistently observed in both parametric and non-parametric tests.

Meaning of Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The R Square value of 0.0272 indicates that the Variation in Learning Methods is only able to explain 2.72% of the variation that occurs in Student Learning Interest, while the remaining 97.28% is explained by other factors outside the following research model. The contribution of this value is very small, which means that the Variation in Learning Methods is not the dominant factor or the main predictor for the high and low interest in learning of students in Christian Education subjects at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya. This finding is in line with the weak correlation value discussed earlier, while at the same time confirming that other factors outside of the variation in learning methods have a much higher role in shaping students' interest in learning.

Meaning of t-Test Results and Hypothesis Results

The results of the t-test indicated that the t-count was 1.8093 low from the table t valued at 1.9804, with a Sig. of 0.073, and the high of the threshold of 0.05. Based on the test criteria that have been set, if t is calculated as low as t of the table and/or the value of Sig. is high from 0.05, then H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected. Thus, the results of hypothesis testing in the following research conclude that H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected, which means that there is no significant influence among the Variation of Learning Methods on Students' Learning Interest in Christian Religious Education subjects at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya at a significance

level of 5%.

In contrast to the results before the invalid item was issued, whose Sig. value (0.0501) was very close to the threshold of 0.05, the results after cleaning this item indicated a clear difference between t count and t table as well as between the Sig. value (0.073) and the level 0.05. This condition indicates that the conclusion that the conclusion of the following research is not significant and no longer at the borderline between significant and insignificant. However, the direction of the relationship that remains positive can still be interpreted proportionally as an indication of a weak influence tendency, which is not statistically strong enough to be statistically significant in the following research sample.

The Relationship of Research Results with Theory

The following research framework states that the variety of learning methods functions to prevent boredom, increase motivation, and provide space for differences in students' learning styles, and the theoretical logic is that the more varied the learning methods applied by teachers, the higher the students' interest in learning. The results of the following research indicate a conceptually consistent relationship direction (positive regression coefficient), but the strength of the relationship is much weaker than assumed in the frame of thought, and statistically insignificant.

These findings are more in line with other theories that explain that learning interest is influenced by the complex interaction between internal factors, such as students' motivation, readiness, and psychological needs, with external factors, such as the learning environment and the teacher's teaching style, where the learning method is only one of many external factors. Thus, it is not surprising that the variation in learning methods alone is not enough to explain the significant variation in students' learning interests, because learning interests are shaped by many other factors that are not included in the following research model.

In addition, the theoretical study of Christian Religious Education emphasizes that the role of teachers in this subject lies not only in the variety of teaching techniques, but also, and even more importantly, in the example of teachers as spiritual guides who direct students to know Christian values in daily life. The characteristics of PAK material which are full of values, attitudes, and appreciation of faith allow students' interest in learning to be influenced more by personal relationships, skills, and spiritual dimensions of teachers than simply variations in material delivery techniques, so that it can theoretically explain why the contribution of method variations to learning interests in the following research is relatively small.

Comparison with Previous Research

The results of the following research are different from the findings of previous research which are referenced in the following research. Dewi Pusparini's (2017) research found that the variation of Jigsaw learning methods and models had a significant effect on students' PKn learning achievement, with a determination coefficient of 80.2%. Similarly, the research of Octavianty Sihombing et al. (2026) found that the variation in collaborative discussion methods and student presentations had a positive and significant effect on student confidence, with a regression coefficient of 0.757, Sig. 0.000, and a determination coefficient of 61.7%. The two studies indicated a strong and significant influence, in contrast to the results of the following research which indicated a very weak and insignificant relationship, with a contribution of only 2.72%.

This difference in results is in line with the difference in the bound variables studied. The two previous studies measured the bound variables in the form of learning achievement

and self-confidence, which tended to be more closely related to the activities and processes of the observed learning method (for example, through group work, discussions, and presentations). The following research measures learning interest, which as described in the theoretical study, is an affective construct that is more influenced by internal factors of students and other external factors outside of the learning method alone. The difference in the context of the subject is also a consideration, considering that the following research was carried out in the subject of Christian Religious Education, which is full of values and spiritual attitudes, in contrast to the context of the PKn subject and the context of student confidence in the previous research. Thus, this difference in results cannot be seen as a contradiction, but as an illustration that the strength of the influence of variation in learning methods can vary depending on the type of bound variable and the characteristics of the subject being studied.

Logical Analysis of the Causes of Research Results

There are several reasons that can logically explain why the following research results indicate a weak and insignificant influence between the Variation of Learning Methods and Student Learning Interests. First, the score distribution of the Variation of Learning Method variables is very narrow and homogeneous, with 98.32% of respondents in the high category and a small standard deviation (4.70). This condition causes variability in variable X to be limited, making it statistically difficult to test correlation or regression in detecting the relationship with variable Y, although the possibility of real relationships in the field remains.

Second, as explained in the theoretical study, students' learning interests are shaped by the interaction of various internal and external factors that are much broader than just variations in learning methods, such as motivation, learning readiness, students' psychological conditions, family environment, and peer support. The following research, in line with the limitations of the problem set, focuses only on the variation of learning methods as the only independent variable, without controlling for these other factors, until the contribution of method variation to the total variation in learning interest becomes small.

Third, the results of the Spearman correlation test, which also indicated a weak and insignificant relationship (rho = 0.079; Sig. = 0.393) indicated that the weak relationship was not solely due to a violation of the assumption of data normality, but was quite consistent with different analysis approaches.

Fourth, at the indicator level, all five indicators of Learning Method Variation and all five indicators of Student Learning Interest are now both in the high category, with a relatively narrow percentage distribution between indicators (range of 79.67%-83.56% for variable X and 76.13%-78.28% for variable Y). This condition strengthens the indication of limited data variability in both variables, which also makes it difficult for statistical tests to detect the relationship between the two.

Fifth, the Sig. value in the correlation test and the t-test (0.073) is not high from the critical level of 0.05 with a fairly clear difference, so that the conclusion that the following research is not significant can be interpreted as less convincing than if the results were right at the borderline. This condition indicates that the relationship between the two variables is weak but not completely negligible, so the following research results should be interpreted as evidence that the influence of learning method variations on students' learning interests in the sample and the context of the following research is not strong enough, not as absolute evidence of the absence of a relationship between the two variables.

Based on the overall discussion above, it can be concluded that the formulation of the problem and the purpose of the research regarding the existence or absence of the Effect of the

Implementation of Variation of Learning Methods on Students' Learning Interest in the subject of Christian Religious Education at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya has been answered, namely statistically there is no significant influence, with the contribution of variation in learning methods on students' learning interest only worth 2.72%, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the following research model.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and the discussion that has been described in Chapter IV regarding the influence of Variation in Learning Methods (X) on Student Learning Interest (Y) in the subject of Christian Religious Education at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya, with the amount of data analyzed as N = 119 respondents, it can be concluded as follows. The score of Variation in Learning Methods (X), which is calculated from 22 valid items after items number 5, 14, and 20 are issued, is in the range of 64 to 84, with an average (mean) of 71.68 (81.46% of the ideal score), a median of 70, and a standard deviation of 4.70. A total of 98.32% of respondents are in the high category and 1.68% in the medium category, without respondents in the low category, so that students' perception of the variety of learning methods applied by teachers is generally high and relatively homogeneous. The Student Learning Interest Score (Y), which is calculated from 24 valid items after item number 10 is issued, is in the range of 65 to 94, with a mean of 74.06 (77.14% of the ideal score), a median of 73, and a standard deviation of 5.94. A total of 59.66% of respondents were in the high category and 40.34% in the medium category, with no respondents in the low category, so that student learning interest was generally classified as good with a more varied distribution than the X variable>. The results of Pearson's Product Moment correlation test yielded a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.165 with a Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.073, which means that it is insignificant at the level of 5%. This result is supported by the Spearman correlation test as a non-parametric comparator, which results in a coefficient (rho) of 0.079 with a Sig. of 0.393, which also indicates the absence of a significant correlation. The results of the simple linear regression analysis produced the equation $\hat{Y} = 59.12 + 0.21X$ with a determination coefficient (R^2) of 0.0272, which means that the Variation in Learning Methods only accounted for 2.72% of the variation in Student Learning Interest, while the remaining 97.28% was influenced by other factors outside the following research model. The results of the t-test resulted in a calculated t value of 1.8093, a low fraction of the table t of 1.9804 (df = 117, $\alpha = 0.05$, two sides), with a Sig. of 0.073, until H0 was accepted and H1 was rejected. Based on all these results, it can be concluded that the Variation in Learning Methods does not have a significant effect on the Students' Learning Interest in the subject of Christian Religious Education at SMPN 8 Palangka Raya at a significance level of 5%. Although the direction of the relationship between the two variables is positive, the strength of the relationship is very weak, until the formulation of the problem and the purpose of the research are declared to have been answered.

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