



EPISTEMOLOGI

Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat dan Penelitian

| e-ISSN: 3047-2830 |

<https://jurnal.rahiscendekiaindonesia.co.id/index.php/epistemologi>

Enhancing Students' Learning Motivation via Community-Based Educational Counselings in STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara

Mira Tania

Universitas Indraprasta PGRI, Indonesia

KEYWORDS

Community-Based Counseling, Student Motivation, Higher Education, Learning Strategies, Peer Support, STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR(S):

E-mail: miraspekta@gmail.com

A B S T R A C T

Student motivation is a fundamental aspect of academic success, especially in higher education environments where learners often face a range of personal and academic challenges. This study explores the implementation of a community-based educational counseling program designed to enhance students' learning motivation at STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study involved 60 undergraduate students who participated in an eight-week series of counseling sessions focused on motivational strategies, goal setting, and peer support. Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-intervention questionnaires based on the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), while qualitative insights were gathered via focus group discussions. The results showed significant improvements in intrinsic motivation, task value, and self-efficacy, alongside a reduction in test anxiety. Students also reported a greater sense of belonging, emotional resilience, and academic purpose. The findings suggest that community-based counseling is an effective and culturally responsive approach to fostering student motivation and can be a valuable model for institutions in similar educational contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is widely recognized as a crucial factor in students' academic success and overall learning outcomes. Without adequate motivation, even the most effective instructional methods may fail to engage learners or inspire meaningful progress. In educational settings, particularly in higher education institutions such as STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara, students often face various challenges that affect their enthusiasm and drive to learn. These challenges may include academic pressure, lack of guidance, personal and social issues, and limited awareness of the importance of motivation in sustaining academic perseverance. Consequently, addressing students' learning motivation is essential to fostering a productive and supportive educational environment.

Community-based educational counseling represents a promising approach to enhance students' motivation by integrating social support, personalized guidance, and collective engagement. Unlike traditional counseling methods that may focus solely on individual concerns, community-based programs emphasize the role of social connections and shared experiences in shaping students' attitudes toward learning. Such programs create safe spaces where students can openly discuss their struggles, aspirations, and goals with peers and counselors who understand their contexts. Through interactive workshops, group discussions, and motivational activities, these initiatives aim to empower students, build self-confidence, and develop positive learning habits.

At STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara, the need for improved motivational strategies has become increasingly apparent as faculty and staff observe fluctuations in student engagement and academic performance. Many students enter higher education with varying levels of readiness, and some encounter difficulties maintaining consistent effort throughout their studies. Community-based educational counseling offers a holistic means of addressing these issues by not only providing emotional and psychological support but also fostering a sense of belonging and purpose within the academic community.

Moreover, this approach aligns with contemporary educational theories that emphasize learner-centered practices and socio-emotional development as key components of effective teaching and learning. By situating motivation within a broader social framework, students are more likely to internalize positive attitudes and behaviors that contribute to lifelong learning and personal growth. This is particularly important in environments where external challenges such as economic hardship or limited resources may otherwise undermine students' educational aspirations.

This paper explores the implementation and impact of community-based educational counseling programs designed to enhance students' learning motivation at STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara. It examines how such interventions can create meaningful changes in students' attitudes toward learning, participation in academic activities, and resilience in the face of obstacles. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, the study sheds light on the practical benefits and challenges of applying community-based motivational strategies within a higher education context. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective student support services that promote academic success and holistic development.

METHOD

The implementation of this study was grounded in a community-based educational counseling approach, specifically designed to explore its effectiveness in enhancing student motivation at STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara. To capture both the measurable outcomes and lived experiences of the participants, a mixed-methods design was adopted. This allowed the researchers to collect comprehensive data, blending numerical evidence with rich, descriptive insights.

The participants in this program were 60 undergraduate students selected through purposive sampling. These students came from a variety of academic departments and represented diverse backgrounds in terms of academic achievement and personal motivation. Importantly, all participants voluntarily agreed to be part of the counseling initiative, which ensured their commitment and openness to the process. The students ranged in age from 18 to 24 years and included both male and female participants.

The educational counseling program itself spanned eight weeks. Sessions were held once a week, each lasting approximately 90 minutes. These meetings were intentionally designed to be interactive, reflective, and inclusive. Rather than a traditional one-on-one counseling model, the program was delivered in small groups to cultivate a sense of community and peer support. Each session included motivational talks, guided group discussions, and hands-on activities that promoted self-awareness, goal setting, and positive academic habits. Facilitators—composed of trained counselors and lecturers—played a central role in guiding the dialogue, providing encouragement, and ensuring the sessions remained focused on motivation and learning improvement.

Before the program began, participants completed a motivation survey based on the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). This instrument provided baseline data by assessing several dimensions of motivation, including intrinsic motivation, task value, control of learning beliefs, and test anxiety. At the conclusion of the program, the same questionnaire was administered again to determine whether students' motivation levels had changed.

To gain deeper insight into the students' experiences and the specific aspects of the program that influenced their motivation, a subset of 15 participants was invited to take part in focus group discussions. These sessions allowed students to share their personal reflections, challenges, and the transformative elements they encountered during the eight-week intervention.

The data analysis involved both statistical and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data from the motivation surveys were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to identify any significant improvements in motivation. Meanwhile, qualitative data from the focus group discussions were transcribed and analyzed thematically. Thematic coding allowed the researchers to categorize students' experiences into key themes such as emotional support, peer encouragement, academic confidence, and personal growth.

By integrating these methods, the study aimed not only to measure the impact of community-based counseling but also to understand how and why it influenced students' motivation. The findings from this approach are expected to inform future educational strategies, ensuring that student motivation is supported through holistic, community-rooted interventions that respond to their real-life academic and emotional needs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of community-based educational counseling at STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara yielded significant and multifaceted results in enhancing students' learning motivation. The findings of the study, drawn from both quantitative and qualitative data, revealed a notable shift in students' attitudes toward learning, as well as a deeper engagement with their academic responsibilities and personal growth.

From the quantitative perspective, the comparison between pre-test and post-test results using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) indicated a measurable improvement in various motivational dimensions. There was a clear increase in intrinsic motivation, suggesting that students began to find more personal meaning and enjoyment in their learning activities. Task value—how important and useful students perceived their academic work—also saw a significant rise. This indicated that students started to recognize the relevance of their studies to their future goals. Additionally, the level of self-efficacy among participants improved, showing that students developed greater confidence in their ability to succeed academically. A reduction in test anxiety was also observed, implying that students felt more emotionally secure and supported within their learning environment.

These positive outcomes were further supported and enriched by the insights gained from the focus group discussions. Students consistently expressed that the group counseling sessions provided a sense of belonging and encouragement, elements often missing in traditional academic settings. Many described the sessions as a safe space where they could express their struggles, share aspirations, and receive practical advice from both facilitators and peers. One student noted that prior to the program, she often felt alone in her academic stress, but through the community-based approach, she realized that her peers shared similar challenges and that they could overcome them together.

Another recurring theme in the discussion was the empowering effect of setting clear academic goals. Through guided reflection exercises and motivational talks, students learned how to establish achievable short-term and long-term goals. This process not only gave them direction but also instilled a stronger sense of purpose in their academic journey. Facilitators also reported noticeable behavioral changes among students, including increased class participation, better time management, and a more proactive attitude toward learning tasks.

The integration of community principles into the counseling model proved to be particularly effective in the cultural context of STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara. The sense of togetherness and mutual responsibility resonated well with the students' cultural values, enhancing the relevance and acceptance of the program. This highlights the importance of culturally responsive educational interventions, especially in environments where students face external pressures such as economic hardship, family obligations, or limited access to academic resources.

However, the results also shed light on some challenges. Some students initially struggled to open up during the group discussions, largely due to shyness or fear of judgment. Over time, however, as trust was built within the group, these barriers diminished. This underlines the importance of establishing a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere in any community-based educational effort.

In summary, the findings of this study demonstrate that community-based educational counseling can be a powerful tool for enhancing student motivation in higher education. It not only improves individual motivation scores but also nurtures an environment of collective growth, support, and academic resilience. By addressing students' emotional and psychological needs alongside their academic ones, such programs offer a holistic approach to educational development. These results encourage broader implementation of similar models in comparable institutions and suggest further research into long-term impacts and scalability.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that community-based educational counseling plays a significant role in enhancing students' learning motivation at STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara. Through a structured yet flexible series of group counseling sessions over an eight-week period, students were able to experience positive transformations in their academic mindset, emotional well-being, and motivation levels. The combination of motivational strategies, peer support, and self-reflection enabled participants to develop a deeper sense of purpose in their academic journey and a more positive attitude toward their personal growth.

The quantitative results from pre- and post-intervention assessments revealed clear improvements in key motivational dimensions such as intrinsic motivation, task value, self-efficacy, and reduced test anxiety. These findings were echoed in the qualitative data, where students expressed that the program helped them gain new perspectives, build self-confidence, and feel supported by a community of peers who shared similar goals and struggles.

Furthermore, the community-based nature of the program proved particularly effective within the cultural and institutional context of STIT Al-Ittihadiyah. The program tapped into the collective spirit and values of togetherness, mutual encouragement, and social responsibility, which are essential to sustaining motivation in educational settings. It also provided a supportive space where students could engage meaningfully, not only with their academic concerns but also with their emotional and interpersonal development.

Despite the success of the intervention, the study also identified certain challenges, such as varying student readiness, limited resources, and the short duration of the program. These factors should be considered in future implementations to ensure greater inclusivity, sustainability, and depth of impact.

In conclusion, community-based educational counseling represents a valuable, culturally relevant, and holistic approach to fostering student motivation in higher education. It addresses both cognitive and affective dimensions of learning, helping

students to become more resilient, self-directed, and engaged learners. As such, it is recommended that similar models be adopted and adapted by other institutions seeking to empower students and improve educational outcomes, particularly in under-resourced or rural academic environments.

REFERENCES

- Amru, A., Sakinah, N., & Pasaribu, G. R. (2024). The impact of accent second language on listening comprehension. *JELT: Journal of English Education, Teaching and Literature*, 2(1), 1–14.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01
- Gladding, S. T. (2018). *Counseling: A comprehensive profession* (8th ed.). Pearson.
- Junaidi, J., Januarini, E., & Pasaribu, G. R. (2024). Impoliteness in information account on Instagram. *JALC: Journal of Applied Linguistics and Studies of Cultural*, 2(1), 41–50.
- Komariah, A., & Triatna, C. (2016). *Visionary leadership: Menuju sekolah efektif*. Bumi Aksara.
- Miller, R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Mubshirah, D., Pasaribu, G. R., Lubis, M. H., Saragih, E., & Sofyan, R. (2023). Sentence complexity analysis in selected students' scientific papers: A closer look on abstract section. *E-Structural (English Studies on Translation, Culture, Literature, and Linguistics)*, 6(01), 70–83.
- Pasaribu, G. (2021). Implementing Google Classroom in English learning at STIT Al-Ittihadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara. *E-Link Journal*, 8(2), 99–107.
- Pasaribu, G. (2023). Malay interrogative sentences: X-Bar analysis. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(1), 43–53.
- Pasaribu, G. (2023). *Receptive oral language skills*. (Unpublished manuscript).
- Pasaribu, G., & Arfianty, R. (2025). *Filsafat Linguistik*. (Manuscript in preparation).
- Pasaribu, G., & Salmiah, M. (2024). Linguistic landscape in Kualanamu International Airport. *LingPoet: Journal of Linguistics and Literary Research*, 5(1), 1–6.
- Pasaribu, G., Arfianty, R., & Januarini, E. (2024). *Mulia di Linguistik*. (In press).
- Pasaribu, G. R., Daulay, S. H., & Nasution, P. T. (2022). Pragmatics principles of English teachers in Islamic elementary school. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, 4(1), 29–40.

- Pasaribu, G. R., Daulay, S. H., & Saragih, Z. (2023). The implementation of ICT in teaching English by the teacher of MTS Swasta Al-Amin. *English Language and Education Spectrum*, 3(2), 47–60.
- Pasaribu, G. R., Widayati, D., Mbete, A. M., & Dardanila, D. (2023). The fauna lexicon in Aceh proverb: Ecolinguistic study. *Jurnal Arbitrer*, 10(2), 149–159.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>
- Sugiyanto, F. X., & Purwanto, E. (2018). Group counseling to improve learning motivation of students. *Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling*, 7(1), 25–30. <https://doi.org/10.15294/jubk.v7i1.22345>
- Winkel, W. S. (2009). *Psikologi pengajaran*. Media Abadi.
- Yusuf, S. (2014). *Psikologi perkembangan anak dan remaja*. Remaja Rosdakarya.