



## The Influence of the Humanistic Approach on Students' Learning Motivation in Grade VI in the Subject of Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study is to determine the positive and significant influence of the humanistic approach on the learning motivation of sixth-grade students in Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja in the 2025/2026 academic year. The research employed a quantitative method with descriptive analysis. The population consisted of all 134 Protestant Christian students at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja, from which a sample of 30 sixth-grade students was selected. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire comprising 38 items, including 18 items for variable X and 20 items for variable Y. The results of data analysis indicate a positive and significant influence of the humanistic approach on students' learning motivation in Grade VI at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja during the 2025/2026 academic year. This finding is supported by the following statistical analyses: (1) Analysis prerequisite tests: (a) The positive correlation test yielded  $r_{xy} = 0.597 > r_{table} (\alpha = 0.05, n = 30) = 0.361$ . (b) The significance test of correlation showed  $t_{count} = 3.933 > t_{table} (\alpha = 0.05, df = n - 2 = 28) = 2.048$ . (2) Influence tests: (a) The regression equation test resulted in the regression formula  $\hat{Y} = 29.51 + 0.60X$ . (b) The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) was 35.6%. (3) Hypothesis testing using the F-test showed  $F_{count} > F_{table} (\alpha = 0.05, \text{numerator } df = k = 20, \text{denominator } df = n - 2 = 30 - 2 = 28)$ , namely  $15.20 > 1.62$ . Therefore, the proposed hypothesis-that there is a positive and significant influence of the humanistic approach on the learning motivation of sixth-grade students in Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja during the 2025/2026 academic year-is accepted, while the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected.*

**Keywords:** Humanistic Approach, Students, Learning Motivation

### INTRODUCTION

An optimal learning process is reflected in the active and holistic engagement of students. Such engagement is characterized by student-centered learning, in which the teacher

functions as both a motivator and facilitator responsible for providing supportive learning facilities, including instructional media and learning resources. Teachers must be skilled in designing learning strategies and utilizing available facilities-especially learning tools-in ways that foster students' interest and enthusiasm for learning. The learning process can be considered effective when indicators of learning motivation are fulfilled. Motivation plays a vital role in every individual's learning process, particularly for students who require guidance and attention from teachers. According to Priansa, "*Learning motivation is the overall driving force within a learner that initiates learning activities, ensures their continuity, and provides direction toward the achievement of desired learning goals.*" Teachers can enhance students' learning motivation by offering appropriate rewards, such as giving sincere praise for student achievements, providing incentives, and fostering both competition and cooperation. The higher a student's learning motivation, the greater the likelihood of achieving optimal learning outcomes. Motivation in learning can be observed through students' behavioral characteristics, including interest, attentiveness, concentration, and perseverance. Motivation is essential in the learning process because individuals without motivation may not find learning activities appealing or meaningful, particularly if these activities do not align with their personal needs. Factors influencing students' lack of learning motivation include both intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic factors refer to internal drives within students that shape their behavior or willingness to act without external encouragement. In education, these intrinsic factors include curiosity, interest, personal satisfaction, and the pursuit of meaningful goals. Meanwhile, extrinsic factors involve external conditions, such as a teacher's ability to create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere and provide recognition or rewards to students.

Based on the researcher's observations, the challenges faced by students at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja-particularly sixth-grade students in the Christian Religious Education (CRE) subject-often stem from low motivation to learn. This issue can arise from various causes, including a lack of interest in the subject matter, monotonous teaching methods such as the lecture approach, which can easily bore students, and limited communication or student participation during lessons. Many students tend to passively listen without opportunities for interaction, resulting in distraction and disruptive behavior. Therefore, CRE learning should be conducted with structured and engaging approaches to ensure effective learning experiences. To address these challenges, a humanistic approach is needed to enhance students' learning motivation. This approach encourages students to learn consciously, discover meaning within the learning process, and develop a positive attitude toward knowledge. It emphasizes the human dimension of learners, where teachers act as facilitators who create a supportive, empathetic, and inclusive learning environment that respects students' diverse potentials. The humanistic approach helps cultivate more effective learning motivation by promoting self-awareness, responsibility, and personal growth. Humanistic learning theory views human beings as autonomous and free individuals capable of making choices about their own lives. Individuals are expected to commit not only to their personal growth but also to the well-being of others. The essence of education, therefore, lies in nurturing interpersonal relationships-both between individuals and within groups-based on mutual care and love. Such relationships foster rapid and meaningful growth, where individuality can flourish in a loving and supportive environment. In the context of Christian Religious Education, the humanistic

approach enables students to better understand Christian values while simultaneously enhancing their motivation to learn and shaping their character according to Christ's teachings. It creates a positive and nurturing learning atmosphere that strengthens intrinsic motivation-driven by curiosity, interest, and personal fulfillment. By allowing students the freedom to explore their interests and find personal meaning in learning, they become more motivated to study independently without relying solely on external rewards.

## METHODS

A research method is a scientific approach used to obtain or collect data for specific purposes and benefits. This process is carried out to answer hypotheses that have been formulated previously. Moreover, the research aims to acquire new knowledge through structured and systematic techniques. According to Sugiyono, the quantitative research methodology is based on the philosophy of positivism and is employed to examine a particular population or sample, using data collection techniques with research instruments. The data obtained are then analyzed quantitatively or statistically with the purpose of testing predetermined hypotheses. The type of research approach used in this study is descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are used to analyze data by describing or illustrating the collected data as it is, without the intention of drawing general conclusions or generalizations. In contrast, inferential or inductive statistics are statistical techniques applied to make inferences about a population. *Ex-post facto* research is a widely used method that provides valuable information for decision-making in the field of education. The term *ex-post facto* indicates that changes in the independent variable have already occurred, and the researcher is faced with the challenge of determining the causes of the observed effects. This type of research investigates causal relationships that are not manipulated or treated by the researcher. Causal research is conducted on programs, activities, or events that have already taken place. The existence of cause-and-effect relationships is based on theoretical studies, suggesting that a certain variable is caused by or gives rise to another variable. This research was conducted at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja, located in North Tapanuli Regency, during the 2025/2026 academic year. Specifically, the study took place in Grade VI of the school. The research was carried out over a period of four months, from May to August 2025

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An *approach* can be described as a method or way of understanding the essence of what needs to be done to solve problems in various aspects of human life. According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Dictionary), an approach refers to the act or process of drawing near or making an effort. In Mohammad Muchlis Solichin's interpretation, *humanistic* refers to a movement aimed at cultivating a sense of humanity and promoting better social relationships-an understanding that views human beings as central subjects or objects of important study. The humanistic approach is one of several learning approaches, grounded in the belief that every individual is inherently good. It emphasizes that human beings possess the capacity to develop positively, constructively, realistically, and reliably. Each person has an *inner-directed drive* to grow and develop

strategies that enable them to function fully. The humanistic approach is a psychological perspective that views individuals as active agents striving to build their *self-concept*. In this view, teachers engage students directly in the learning process, helping them gain meaningful learning experiences, feel accepted, respected, admired, and valued as human beings. According to H.M. Abdul Hamid et al., *"The humanistic approach is an approach that gives attention to learners as human beings, not as objects that merely record a set of knowledge."* This approach tends to give learners the freedom to discuss and express their feelings as part of self-actualization. The operational steps of this approach include: providing broad opportunities for students to practice language in various contexts, engaging in role-play to respond to diverse situations, and offering accessible examples that students can easily follow. Learning materials should not be presented as rigid or burdensome; rather, they should become a natural need for learners, just like any other basic need. There are several key views about human nature within the humanistic approach: Humans possess a unique and real ability to be self-aware, allowing them to think and make decisions. The stronger one's self-awareness, the greater their freedom. The capacity to choose among alternatives and make free decisions within boundaries is an essential human characteristic. Such freedom to choose and act always carries responsibility. Existential thinkers emphasize that human beings are responsible for their own existence and destiny, not mere products of deterministic forces or conditioning.

Freedom, responsibility, and anxiety: Awareness of freedom and responsibility can give rise to existential anxiety, a fundamental human attribute. This anxiety often emerges from the realization of human limitations and the inevitability of death. Awareness of mortality gives profound meaning to life, reminding individuals that their time to actualize their potential is limited. Creation of meaning: Humans are unique in their pursuit of purpose and in creating values that give life meaning. To be human also means to face solitude-being born and dying alone. Yet humans naturally seek meaningful relationships with others because they are rational and social beings. Failure to form meaningful connections can result in isolation, alienation, and loneliness. Humans also strive for self-actualization-the realization of their inherent potential. When individuals fail to actualize themselves, it may lead to psychological distress or pathology, which can be seen as the failure to utilize one's potential. From these descriptions, it can be concluded that the humanistic approach is one that *humanizes humans*-an effort to cultivate humanity, reason, and cultural refinement. It focuses on developing individuals' potential to recognize, explore, and maximize their abilities.

### ***Steps in the Humanistic Approach***

To ensure an effective learning process, teachers must first understand their students before teaching begins. This understanding helps create a comfortable and positive learning environment for both teachers and students. Teachers must first get to know their students. This is a crucial step that enables teachers to conduct the teaching process smoothly. By understanding students' preferences, habits, strengths, weaknesses, and personalities, teachers can adapt their teaching to meet individual needs effectively. Teachers should establish open and positive communication with students to make them feel comfortable and accepted. Effective communication can be achieved through direct interaction, clear explanation of information and ideas, and avoiding complicated or

confusing language. Such communication fosters trust and encourages active participation in learning. Teachers must be able to inspire, motivate, and encourage students to believe in their abilities and commit to learning. Motivation-both material and non-material-is essential for education. Strong motivation positively influences students' enthusiasm and helps them develop their potential and interests while driving them toward continuous progress. Teachers should teach with empathy and affection, treating students as their own children without discrimination. In humanistic learning, teachers are expected to be patient, compassionate, tolerant, and democratic. They must understand each student holistically-not merely as an object of education but as a full human subject. Teachers should guide students toward becoming complete human beings aligned with noble human values. The practical steps in applying the humanistic learning approach include: Defining learning objectives, determining lesson materials, and identifying students' prior knowledge, identifying topics that allow active participation and experiential learning. Based on the expert views above, it can be concluded that the steps of the humanistic approach are essential for teachers in the teaching and learning process. By understanding and applying these steps, teachers can define clear instructional goals and effectively motivate students to believe in their abilities, thereby fostering stronger learning motivation in the classroom.

### ***Definition of Learning Motivation***

*Motivation* refers to an internal desire or drive that arises within an individual as a result of inspiration, encouragement, and willingness to engage in activities sincerely and wholeheartedly, aiming for quality outcomes. Motivation can originate both internally and externally. The term *motive* refers to the driving force that compels someone to act. A motive can be defined as an internal condition that initiates specific activities to achieve goals, or as a state of readiness to act. From this root, *motivation* can be understood as an activated driving force that becomes operative, particularly when the need to achieve a goal becomes urgent or essential. Learning always involves behavioral or performance changes achieved through various activities such as reading, observing, listening, and imitating. Learning is a conscious, deliberate, active, systematic, and integrative process through which individuals gain relatively permanent changes in behavior or behavioral potential. *Learning motivation* refers to both internal and external forces that drive students to engage in learning activities, typically reflected through specific indicators. It encompasses all psychological energies within students that initiate learning activities, sustain their persistence, and direct their actions toward achieving educational goals. Learning motivation is a learner's internal condition that initiates activity, maintains enthusiasm, and provides direction to reach desired outcomes. Children are naturally curious and driven to explore their surroundings. This curiosity should be encouraged-not suppressed-by applying flexible rules that accommodate individual differences. From the various definitions above, it can be concluded that *learning motivation* represents the total driving forces-both internal and external-that stimulate students to engage in learning activities. The strength or weakness of a student's motivation significantly influences their success in the learning process. Determining learning objectives - The teacher motivates students by explaining the goals and benefits of learning, outlining what will be studied, the competencies to be achieved, and the methods to be applied. Selecting learning materials - The teacher relates new materials to students' previous

learning experiences, poses questions to help recall earlier lessons, and connects them to upcoming topics. The teacher provides opportunities for students to ask questions about content they have not yet understood, ensuring that these questions remain relevant to the subject matter. During lessons, the teacher presents material clearly; when students experience difficulty, they are encouraged to ask questions, which the teacher answers accurately and accessibly. When assigning homework, the teacher allows students to use various resources, including books and online materials, to find answers. Guiding students to understand the meaning of their learning experiences - After explaining the material, the teacher invites a student to share their understanding. If the student feels hesitant, the teacher immediately provides guidance and encouragement to help them express their personal opinion confidently. Guiding students in applying new concepts to real-life situations - When students struggle to express ideas coherently, the teacher assists them in articulating their thoughts in their own words. Evaluating the learning process and outcomes - Students are divided into groups to discuss, gather information, present findings, and exchange ideas about the learning material. Each group is required to formulate conclusions based on what they have learned. Through this Humanistic Approach in the sixth grade at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja during the 2025/2026 academic year, students' learning motivation improved positively and significantly. This improvement was reflected through several motivation indicators, including: (1) perseverance in completing tasks; (2) persistence in facing difficulties; (3) independence in achieving success without external pressure; (4) enthusiasm for self-directed learning; (5) enjoyment in problem-solving; (6) striving for optimal performance; (7) the ability to defend personal opinions; (8) determination in upholding beliefs; and (9) engagement in enjoyable learning activities. From the analysis requirements test, which examined whether a positive relationship existed between variable X and variable Y, the calculated correlation coefficient was  $r_{xy} = 0.597$ , compared to the  $r$ -table value at a 5% significance level and a confidence interval (CI) of 95% for  $n = 30$ , which is  $0.361$ . Since  $r_{xy} > r$ -table ( $0.597 > 0.361$ ), it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between variable X and variable Y - that is, a positive influence of the Humanistic Approach on students' learning motivation in grade VI at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja in the 2025/2026 academic year. The significance test further confirmed this finding. The calculated  $t$ -value ( $t_{count} = 3.933$ ) was compared with the  $t_{table}$  value at a 5% significance level and  $n - 2 = 28$ , which is  $2.048$ . Since  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  ( $3.933 > 2.048$ ), it was determined that there is a significant relationship between variable X and variable Y — indicating that the Humanistic Approach has a significant influence on the learning motivation of grade VI students at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja. From the regression test, the following results were obtained:

- a. The regression equation is  $\hat{Y} = 29.51 + 0.60X$ . This equation indicates that, with a constant of 29.51, every increase in the Humanistic Approach contributes to an increase of 0.60 in students' learning motivation.
- b. b) The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) was 0.356, meaning that 35.6% of the variance in students' learning motivation is influenced by the Humanistic Approach.

From the F-test, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results show that the calculated  $F$ -value ( $F_{count} = 15.20$ ) is greater than the  $F_{table}$  value ( $F_{table} = 1.62$ , with numerator df = 20 and denominator df = 28). Since  $F_{count} \geq F_{table}$  ( $15.20 > 1.62$ ), the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), which

states that there is no effect, is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ), which states that there is a positive and significant effect, is accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the research hypothesis proposed by the author is accepted: there is a positive and significant influence of the Humanistic Approach on the improvement of students' learning motivation in grade VI at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja during the 2025/2026 academic year.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it was revealed that the hypothesis testing yielded a calculated F-value ( $F_{count}$ ) greater than the F-table value ( $F_{table}$ ), namely  $15.20 > 1.62$ . Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that there is a positive and significant influence of the Humanistic Approach on the learning motivation of sixth-grade students at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja in the 2025/2026 academic year, with an effect magnitude of 35.6%. From both theoretical and empirical perspectives, it can be concluded that the Humanistic Approach effectively enhances students' learning motivation in Grade VI at SD Negeri 174573 Hutaraja. The better the implementation of the Humanistic Approach, the higher the students' learning motivation tends to be, leading to improved engagement and learning outcomes.

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