

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

“The teacher as artist brings out the importance of creative teaching strategies and student response. They do not treat students as objects to be processed in assembly-line fashion.” (Hight and Rubin, as cited in Van Brummelen, 2009, p. 35). Those lines have a meaning that teacher needs to be creative in using many teaching strategies to make the student’s learning become more “alive” because basically students are human beings. As human beings, students have dynamic characteristics that cannot be treated with the same strategies repeatedly. Having learning experiences with repeating strategies may make them feel bored. Teacher should help students to learn well without forgetting that students are human beings who cannot be treated with the same treatment for many times.

In his book, Obiakor stated that we need truly good teachers who are willing to meet their pedagogical challenges in today’s classrooms by doing several challenging things. And one of them is making school fun (2001, p. 17). Basically, by using creative teaching strategies, it will make schooling time more fun. Students will get the feeling of excitement in learning when they get a variety of unexpected teaching methods. They will feel that every day in the classroom would be different from day to day.

Every time students feel that school is fun, it will highly impact on the student motivation. Motivation focuses on the energy, vitality, and intensity of

learning (Yount, 1996, p. 277). In addition, he also defined motivation as directive, sustaining quality that energizes and maintains learning activities. In short, motivation focuses on the intention to learn. The connection between “school is fun” with the student motivation is very close. When students feel comfortable in the learning time, they will begin to love the learning itself. They even do not even realize that they are actually in the learning process. As a result, their motivation will be higher (ibid., p. 277).

The discussion about motivation becomes more important because learners bear the image of God, as Genesis 1:27 said that “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created him; male and female he created them”. Besides, they were created to respond His call, as the Holy Bible said in the next verse, “God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground’”. Those two verses become two guidelines for motivating students to in the learning. They need proper motivation in learning as a preparation for their big responsibility to manage the world.

Research has shown another reason why motivation becomes important to be afforded. It tells that proper motivation for learning result not only in better achievement, but also in better student attitudes and fewer classroom problems (Yount, 1996, p. 278). That is why teacher need to be creative in using teaching methods or strategies to gain higher motivation that is very important for students in learning.

Gangel said, “Jesus Christ, the perfect teacher, is our model for choosing and using creative methods” (1988, p. 166). He said so because Jesus used a variety of methods to get people actively involved in the learning process. In a book titled *A History of Christian Education*, the writer stated that Jesus was creative in His use of methods to teaching a wide variety of persons in an educational balance between the traditions of His people and the more complete revelation of God’s will for humankind (Reed & Prevost, 1993, p. 67). Most books of Christian education explained that Jesus used many methods in teaching like: parables, object lessons, dialogue, comparison, poetry, hyperbole, puns, and so on. Realizing this truth that Jesus was very creative in teaching, Christian teachers need to follow the examples of Jesus. Teachers need to be more sensitive and creative in choosing and using the best strategies in teaching.

Yet there are some teachers who lack of creativity in using teaching method or strategies. Even though they are very well-educated and have learned about best teaching methods, it is not true that some teachers always use the creativity in teaching method or strategies. For example, in a school that the writer has teaching internship, an international school in Jakarta area, the writer found that grade eight students felt bored and lacked motivation in learning geography and history. As the writer did some observation in the first three months of teaching internship, the situation can be concluded as students felt bored because they got the same method many times from the teacher and had to pay attention to uninteresting presentations by the teacher. Teaching methods that used for many times can be so boring because students can predict what will happen next. Paying attention to an uninteresting presentation which is predictable also makes them

bored because there is nothing that might attract students to follow the lesson. That is, Marsh said, “one of situation likely to bring about low level of motivation is students have to listen to uninteresting presentation by the teacher” (2004, p. 46).

This situation has shown a contrast, considering that this school is a very big school which has great facilities. This school has more facilities that other International schools have. In other words, this school has met the standard of facilities that International schools must have. With these great facilities, the teacher should be more interesting in teaching students with various teaching methods or strategies. But the fact has shown that students felt bored with the way of teacher taught. The teacher often gave some questions to be answered about the topic they are learning, after that she will explain student through direct instruction. Sometimes she taught the students by using discovery learning, but it was infrequently. Most of time she gave some questions and explains the lesson through direct instruction. As a consequence, students became lack of motivation in learning Social Science.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Based on the background above, there is a big problem in the teaching and learning process in Social Science. Students have a lack of motivation in learning Social Science because the uninteresting teaching methods that teacher used. From this big problem, then come some questions that need to be answered through this study.

1. Can educational games be used to increase grade 8 students' motivation in learning Social Science?
2. Why do educational games increase grade 8 students' motivation in learning Social Science?
3. How can educational games be used to increase grade 8 students' motivation in learning Social Science?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the statement of problem above, the purpose of study can be defined as:

1. To ensure that educational game can be used to increase grade 8 students' motivation in learning Social Science.
2. To know the reason why educational games can be used to increase grade 8 students motivation in learning Social Science.
3. To understand the way how to implement educational games in learning to increase grade 8 students' motivation in learning Social Science.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

This study has some benefits for students, teachers, and Christian schools. For students, this study is expected to successfully help students find the fun way to learn so that their motivation in learning Social Science can be increased. For teachers, this study is highly expected to helps teachers to use a creative teaching strategy named educational games to increase students' motivation in learning

Social Science. For Christian schools, this study is expected to help any Christian school to create fun environment for students in learning Social Science.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

There are some terms that will be used by the writer in this study. To make it clear, here is the explanation:

1. Educational games

Educational games are competitive rule based activities involving one or more players with an expressed goal of performing or meeting a goal at a superior level (i.e. winning) either in relation to a previous performance level (one player game) or in relation to the performance levels of other players. Success in the activity requires use of subject matter in some way (Mayer, 2005, p. 563-564).

2. Motivation

Motivation is an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behavior". (Woolfolk as cited in Marsh, 2004, p. 336). Furthermore, learning motivation has been defined as the willingness to attend and to learn material presented in a developmental program (Noe, 1986, p. 5).

3. Social science

Social science is any discipline or branch of science that deals with the sociocultural aspects of human behavior. The social sciences generally include cultural anthropology, economics, political science, sociology, criminology, and science, sociology, criminology, and social psychology (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia).