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The Effect of Joyful Learning and Teams Games Tournament Learning on Motivation among Students with Intellectual Disabilities

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of Joyful Learning and the Teams Games Tournament learning model on the learning motivation of students with intellectual disabilities at SLBN 1 Bulukumba, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The study responds to a classroom problem in which students showed low participation, limited task completion, passive classroom behavior, and declining attendance. A quantitative explanatory design was applied with a total sample of 20 students. Parents assisted students during questionnaire completion to support comprehension and response accuracy. Data were collected through observation and Likert-scale questionnaires, then analyzed using validity testing, reliability testing, classical assumption testing, multiple linear regression, t-tests, F-test, and coefficient of determination analysis with SPSS 26. The results show that Joyful Learning has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation (B = 0.620, beta = 0.478, t = 2.972, p = 0.009). The Teams Games Tournament model also has a positive and significant effect (B = 0.482, beta = 0.467, t = 2.902, p = 0.010). Simultaneously, both predictors significantly explain learning motivation (F = 16.376, p < 0.001), with R2 = 0.658 and adjusted R2 = 0.618. These findings indicate that emotionally supportive and game-based cooperative learning can strengthen motivation in special education settings when teachers structure activities clearly and adapt them to students needs.

Keywords: Joyful Learning; Teams Games Tournament; learning motivation; intellectual disabilities; special education.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning motivation is a central issue in special education because it shapes attention, engagement, persistence, and willingness to complete learning tasks. For students with intellectual disabilities, motivation cannot be separated from the way teachers design learning experiences. Students may require concrete activities, repeated guidance, emotional security, peer interaction, and structured reinforcement to remain engaged in classroom learning. A teaching method that only relies on explanation and question-answer routines often fails to sustain attention because it gives students limited space to experience, participate, and express achievement.

SLBN 1 Bulukumba faces this practical challenge. Classroom observations in the source thesis reported that several students with intellectual disabilities showed low participation, remained passive during lessons, did not complete assigned tasks, and preferred staying silent even when teachers explained material enthusiastically. Attendance also declined, and information from parents indicated that some students preferred playing at home rather than attending school. This local condition shows that learning motivation needs to be addressed through methods that are enjoyable, concrete, and socially supportive.

Joyful Learning offers one relevant response to this problem. The approach places students in a learning atmosphere that is safe, interesting, and emotionally positive. Jauhar (2014) explains that joyful learning encourages learners to act, ask questions, express opinions, and respond to others ideas. Darmansyah (2012) also emphasizes that enjoyable instruction reduces boredom and supports students active involvement. In special education, this approach is important because students with intellectual disabilities often need learning conditions that reduce pressure and provide repeated encouragement.

The Teams Games Tournament (TGT) model also has strong potential for special education classrooms. TGT combines class presentation, teamwork, games, tournaments, and team recognition. Rusman (2018) describes TGT as a cooperative model that organizes learning through structured team competition and reward. Nurhayati et al. (2022) argue that TGT can create an enjoyable learning environment and increase active student contribution. In this study, TGT is relevant because students with intellectual disabilities often respond better when lessons include concrete tasks, group support, and clear recognition of effort.

Previous studies have discussed joyful learning and TGT in general education settings. However, empirical evidence in special education, especially among students with intellectual disabilities in Indonesian state special schools, remains limited. This study fills that gap by testing

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the effect of Joyful Learning and TGT on learning motivation at SLBN 1 Bulukumba. The study has three objectives: to examine the effect of Joyful Learning on learning motivation, to examine the effect of TGT on learning motivation, and to examine the simultaneous effect of both approaches on learning motivation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Learning Motivation

Students with intellectual disabilities have limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Shanty (2012) explains that intellectual disability refers to below-average intellectual functioning that appears during the developmental period and affects adaptive behavior. These characteristics may influence classroom attention, independence, communication, task completion, and problem-solving. Therefore, teachers need to design learning activities that match students cognitive readiness and provide concrete support.

Learning motivation refers to the internal and external forces that encourage students to engage in learning activities. Sardiman (2012), Dimyati and Mudjiono (2009), and Kompri (2016) describe motivation as a key driver of learning behavior, persistence, and achievement. In special education, motivation must be built through learning activities that are meaningful, accessible, and emotionally secure. Students with intellectual disabilities may not respond well to abstract instruction, but they can show stronger motivation when activities involve play, interaction, repetition, and immediate feedback.

Joyful Learning

Joyful Learning is a learning strategy that creates enjoyable, safe, active, and meaningful classroom conditions. It does not mean that learning becomes unstructured. Rather, it requires teachers to use varied media, flexible interaction, positive reinforcement, and activities that help students focus on learning tasks. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) and Fullan et al. (2018) emphasize that meaningful and engaging learning environments support deeper involvement. Kovač et al. (2023) also link meaningful learning with motivation and emotional engagement.

In this study, Joyful Learning includes four indicators: student active involvement, teacher use of media and varied methods, classroom atmosphere arranged through learning materials and innovation, and teacher encouragement for students to solve problems. These indicators are important for students with intellectual disabilities because they provide active experiences and reduce the fear of making mistakes. When students feel safe and interested, they are more likely

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to participate and complete learning tasks.

Teams Games Tournament

Teams Games Tournament is a cooperative learning model that uses group work and academic games. According to Rusman (2018), TGT includes five stages: class presentation, teams, games, tournament, and team recognition. This sequence enables teachers to explain the material, organize students into groups, conduct learning games, create tournament activities, and give recognition to teams. The model shifts learning from teacher-centered delivery to student-centered participation.

TGT supports learning motivation because it combines cooperation, competition, and recognition. Laily et al. (2020) and Nurhayati et al. (2022) show that game-based cooperative learning can support participation and learning outcomes. In special education, TGT needs adaptation. Teachers must simplify rules, adjust the difficulty of questions, provide concrete examples, and ensure that competition remains supportive. When implemented carefully, TGT can increase student attention and peer interaction without creating excessive pressure.

Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical and empirical review, the study proposes three hypotheses. First, Joyful Learning has a positive and significant effect on the learning motivation of students with intellectual disabilities. Second, the Teams Games Tournament model has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. Third, Joyful Learning and Teams Games Tournament simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on learning motivation.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative explanatory design. The design was selected because the study tested the effect of two independent variables, Joyful Learning (X1) and Teams Games Tournament (X2), on one dependent variable, learning motivation (Y). The research site was SLBN 1 Bulukumba, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The study involved students with intellectual disabilities who received learning activities using Joyful Learning and TGT-based practices.

The population consisted of all students with intellectual disabilities at SLBN 1 Bulukumba, totaling 20 students. Because the population was small, the study used total sampling. Therefore, all 20 students became research respondents. Parents assisted students when completing the questionnaire. This assistance was necessary because the respondents had different levels of

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comprehension and needed support to understand the statements.

Data were collected through observation, questionnaire, and literature study. Observation was used to examine the classroom implementation of Joyful Learning and TGT. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale: always = 5, often = 4, sometimes = 3, never = 2, and never at all = 1. The indicators were adapted from the thesis instruments and theoretical references used in the original study.

Table 1. Research Variables and Main Indicators

Variable	Code	Main Indicators	Scale
Joyful Learning	X1	Active involvement; varied media and methods; innovative classroom atmosphere; teacher encouragement for problem-solving	Likert 1-5
Teams Games Tournament	X2	Class presentation; teams; games; tournament; team recognition	Likert 1-5
Learning Motivation	Y	Interest in teacher; interest in lesson; enthusiasm; desire for recognition; habits and moral action; remembering the lesson	Likert 1-5

Source: Processed primary data from SPSS 26 output, 2026.

The data were analyzed using SPSS 26. Instrument quality was tested through item validity and Cronbachs alpha reliability. The classical assumption tests included normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. The main hypothesis testing used multiple linear regression. The regression model was formulated as Y = a + b1X1 + b2X2 + e, where Y represents learning motivation, X1 represents Joyful Learning, X2 represents Teams Games Tournament, and e represents the error term.

The significance level was set at 0.05. The t-test examined the partial effect of each independent variable. The F-test examined the simultaneous effect of Joyful Learning and TGT. The coefficient of determination measured how much variation in learning motivation could be explained by the two predictors.

RESULTS

The observation results showed that Joyful Learning was implemented in the good category. Students were involved in learning activities, teachers used learning media and varied methods, and classroom conditions were arranged to make learning more attractive. One indicator still needed improvement: teachers encouragement for students to solve problems

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independently. This condition is understandable because some students still had moderate to low thinking ability and needed repeated guidance.

The observation of TGT implementation also showed a good category. Teachers conducted class presentation, organized teams, used games, held tournament activities, and gave team recognition. These stages helped students learn through more active and interactive classroom routines.

Validity and Reliability

The validity test showed that the questionnaire items were accepted based on the comparison between item correlation and r-table value. The reliability test also showed acceptable internal consistency because all Cronbachs alpha values exceeded 0.60.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

No.	Variable	Cronbachs Alpha	Interpretation
1	Joyful Learning (X1)	0.647	Reliable
2	Teams Games Tournament (X2)	0.740	Reliable
3	Learning Motivation (Y)	0.698	Reliable

Source: Processed primary data from SPSS 26 output, 2026.

Classical Assumption Tests

The normality test indicated that the residuals followed the diagonal pattern in the normal probability plot, so the regression model met the normality assumption. The multicollinearity test showed that both independent variables had tolerance values of 0.776 and VIF values of 1.289. These values indicate no multicollinearity because tolerance was above 0.10 and VIF was below 10. The heteroscedasticity scatterplot showed that residual points spread randomly above and below zero, so the model did not show heteroscedasticity symptoms.

Multiple Linear Regression

The regression output produced the equation: Y = 2.717 + 0.620X1 + 0.482X2. The constant value of 2.717 indicates the baseline level of learning motivation when both predictors are held constant. The coefficient of Joyful Learning means that each one-unit increase in Joyful Learning is associated with a 0.620 increase in learning motivation, assuming TGT remains constant. The

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coefficient of TGT means that each one-unit increase in TGT is associated with a 0.482 increase in learning motivation, assuming Joyful Learning remains constant.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	2.717	2.912		0.933	0.364
Joyful Learning (X1)	0.620	0.209	0.478	2.972	0.009
Teams Games Tournament (X2)	0.482	0.166	0.467	2.902	0.010

Source: Processed primary data from SPSS 26 output, 2026.

The partial test shows that Joyful Learning significantly affects learning motivation because p = 0.009, which is lower than 0.05. The effect is positive, as indicated by B = 0.620 and beta = 0.478. The partial test also shows that TGT significantly affects learning motivation because p = 0.010, which is lower than 0.05. The effect is positive, as indicated by B = 0.482 and beta = 0.467. The standardized beta values show that Joyful Learning has a slightly stronger contribution than TGT.

Simultaneous Effect and Coefficient of Determination

Table 4. ANOVA and Model Summary

Statistic	Value
Regression sum of squares	120.602
Residual sum of squares	62.598
Total sum of squares	183.200
F	16.376
Sig.	0.000
R	0.811
R2	0.658
Adjusted R2	0.618
Std. error of estimate	1.91891
Durbin-Watson	1.647

Source: Processed primary data from SPSS 26 output, 2026.

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The F-test result shows that Joyful Learning and TGT simultaneously have a significant effect on learning motivation because F = 16.376 with p < 0.001. The R2 value of 0.658 means that 65.8 percent of the variation in learning motivation can be explained by Joyful Learning and TGT. The remaining 34.2 percent may be explained by other factors not included in this model, such as family support, student readiness, teacher competence, classroom facilities, peer support, and individual learning characteristics.

DISCUSSION

The first finding shows that Joyful Learning has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. This result confirms that students with intellectual disabilities benefit from learning conditions that are emotionally secure, varied, and active. Joyful Learning helps students experience learning as a meaningful activity rather than a task that creates pressure. This effect is consistent with Jauhar (2014), who states that enjoyable learning encourages students to ask questions, express opinions, and participate actively. It is also consistent with Darmansyah (2012), who argues that enjoyable learning reduces boredom and improves classroom engagement.

In the context of SLBN 1 Bulukumba, Joyful Learning is relevant because the students previously showed passivity, low task completion, and weak attendance. When teachers use media, arrange the class atmosphere, provide positive interaction, and encourage students to participate, students receive direct emotional and cognitive support. This support can increase confidence and help them respond to learning activities more positively. The standardized beta value also shows that Joyful Learning is the slightly more dominant predictor in the model.

The second finding shows that TGT has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. This result indicates that game-based cooperative learning can support students with intellectual disabilities when the model is adapted to their needs. TGT gives students a clear learning sequence. They listen to the teachers presentation, work with peers, answer questions through games, participate in a tournament, and receive recognition. These activities can strengthen attention because students see learning as concrete and interactive.

This finding supports Rusman (2018), who describes TGT as a cooperative model that builds active participation through games and group competition. It also aligns with Nurhayati et al. (2022), who explain that TGT can create enjoyable learning and increase student contribution. For students with intellectual disabilities, the recognition stage is especially important because it gives immediate social reinforcement. However, teachers must ensure that tournaments remain supportive. Competition should not embarrass students who need more assistance. The purpose

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is to build motivation, not to create pressure.

The third finding shows that Joyful Learning and TGT simultaneously affect learning motivation. This result is theoretically reasonable because the two approaches strengthen each other. Joyful Learning provides the emotional climate, while TGT provides the cooperative and game-based structure. Together, they create learning that is enjoyable, active, social, and goal-oriented. The model explains 65.8 percent of the variation in learning motivation, which indicates a strong practical contribution in this local setting.

The findings offer practical implications for special education teachers. First, teachers should design lessons with varied media and concrete examples. Second, teachers should include simple group games that match students cognitive ability. Third, teachers should provide recognition for effort, cooperation, and progress, not only for correct answers. Fourth, teachers should guide students gradually in problem-solving activities because this indicator still needs improvement. These steps can help teachers build motivation while respecting students learning characteristics.

This study has limitations. The sample was limited to 20 students in one school, so the findings should be interpreted as contextual evidence rather than broad generalization. The study also used questionnaire data assisted by parents, so responses may reflect support during completion. Future studies can use a larger sample, include control and comparison groups, apply pre-test and post-test measurement, and add qualitative observation to capture classroom interaction in more detail.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Joyful Learning has a positive and significant effect on the learning motivation of students with intellectual disabilities at SLBN 1 Bulukumba. The regression result shows B = 0.620, beta = 0.478, t = 2.972, and p = 0.009. This finding means that a more enjoyable, active, and supportive classroom atmosphere can improve students motivation to learn.

The Teams Games Tournament model also has a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. The regression result shows B = 0.482, beta = 0.467, t = 2.902, and p = 0.010. This finding indicates that cooperative games, structured tournaments, and team recognition can increase students involvement when teachers adapt the model to the abilities of students with intellectual disabilities.

Joyful Learning and Teams Games Tournament simultaneously have a significant effect on

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learning motivation. The model produces F = 16.376, p < 0.001, R2 = 0.658, and adjusted R2 = 0.618. Therefore, both methods should be considered complementary strategies for increasing motivation in special education classrooms. Teachers at SLBN 1 Bulukumba and similar schools should strengthen enjoyable learning, structured group games, and supportive recognition while giving extra guidance in independent problem-solving activities.

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