

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF ADDITIONAL LEARNING IN IMPROVING OFFICIAL TEST SCORES

Mutia Zahra Mikayla Lubis¹⁾, Muhammad Faiz Ramadhan²⁾, Faras Hilal Nasution³⁾, Roffi Kabanta Tarigan⁴⁾, Aldo Rasmana Tarigan⁵⁾, Risna Mira Bella Saragih⁶⁾

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}SMA Al Azhar, Medan

Email: ¹mutiazahramikayla088@gmail.com, ²mfaizramadhan2910@gmail.com, ³farashilal4@gmail.com, ⁴kabantaroffi@gmail.com, ⁵aldorasmana40@gmail.com, ⁶risnamirabellasaragih@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze students' perception of additional learning in order to improve official test scores, especially in official class students at Al Azhar Superior High School Medan. The method used is a descriptive quantitative approach with a total sampling technique, involving all official class students as respondents. The research instrument is in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire which includes indicators of student perception of the material, learning methods, the role of teachers, and the effectiveness of additional learning on the understanding and results of the official test try-out. The results showed an average perception score of 4.14, which was classified as a positive category. The indicators with the highest scores were program sustainability (4.5) and clarity of teacher explanations (4.4), while indicators with relatively low scores were an increase in try out scores (3.8). These findings indicate that students consider additional learning beneficial, not only in improving material comprehension, but also in building confidence in facing official tests. In conclusion, students' positive perceptions of additional learning contribute significantly to their academic and affective readiness, so this program is worthy of being maintained and further developed to support students' success in official school selection

Keywords: Student Perception, Additional Learning, Official Tests, Academic Readiness, Learning Motivation.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi siswa terhadap pembelajaran tambahan dalam rangka meningkatkan nilai ujian kedinasan, khususnya pada siswa kelas kedinasan di SMA Al Azhar Superior Medan. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan teknik total sampling, dengan melibatkan seluruh siswa kelas kedinasan sebagai responden. Instrumen penelitian berupa angket skala likert yang meliputi indikator persepsi siswa terhadap materi, metode pembelajaran, peran guru, dan efektivitas pembelajaran tambahan terhadap pemahaman dan hasil try out ujian kedinasan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan skor persepsi rata-rata sebesar 4,14 yang tergolong kategori positif. Indikator dengan skor tertinggi adalah keberlanjutan program (4,5) dan kejelasan penjelasan guru (4,4), sedangkan indikator dengan skor relatif rendah adalah peningkatan skor try out (3,8). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa menganggap pembelajaran tambahan bermanfaat, tidak hanya dalam meningkatkan pemahaman materi, tetapi juga dalam membangun kepercayaan diri dalam menghadapi ujian kedinasan. Kesimpulannya, persepsi positif siswa terhadap pembelajaran tambahan berkontribusi signifikan terhadap kesiapan akademik dan afektif mereka, sehingga program ini layak dipertahankan dan dikembangkan lebih lanjut untuk mendukung keberhasilan siswa dalam pemilihan sekolah resmi.

Kata kunci: Persepsi Siswa, Pembelajaran Tambahan, Tes Resmi, Kesiapan Akademik, Motivasi Belajar.

INTRODUCTION

Every year, the number of applicants to civil service schools in Indonesia continues to rise significantly. Data from the National Civil Service Agency (BKN, 2023) show that more than 300,000 applicants compete for only about 6,000–7,000 available seats. This situation reflects the increasingly competitive nature of the selection process, particularly in

the Computer Assisted Test (CAT)-based Basic Competency Selection (SKD), which functions as the initial and most crucial screening stage. The competitiveness of this process drives many senior high schools (SMA) in Indonesia to implement various strategies to help students prepare

academically, technically, and mentally for the exam.

Al Azhar Superior High School in Medan is one of the schools that has proactively responded to this demand by opening a civil service class equipped with supplementary learning programs such as evening tutoring, focused CAT simulations, and intensive mentoring. The primary goal of this initiative is to improve students' readiness and performance in the SKD test. However, the success of such programs largely depends on students' perceptions how they evaluate, appreciate, and internalize the supplementary learning experience.

Student perception plays a fundamental role in shaping the learning process. According to Rozania et al. (2019), positive student perceptions toward learning activities foster motivation and engagement, while negative perceptions tend to reduce enthusiasm and inhibit optimal outcomes. Similarly, Fahira et al. (2022) found that the way students perceive their learning environment and instructional methods is directly linked to their academic performance. When students view supplementary learning as relevant and supportive, they are more likely to exhibit persistence and improved learning results.

In addition, Alimuddin & Arifin (2024) emphasize that student perceptions of teachers and instructional methods strongly influence their level of engagement. Even well-prepared materials will be ineffective if the chosen teaching approach does not align with students' learning preferences. Conversely, methods perceived as appropriate can enhance comprehension and satisfaction. These findings suggest that perception is not only a psychological variable but also an educational determinant that influences students' achievement levels.

Despite the growing implementation of supplementary programs, not all students find them beneficial. Some students experience fatigue and feel overwhelmed by packed schedules, while others struggle to connect with the methods used. (Irawati & Santaria, (2020) highlight that disparities in student perceptions lead to different learning outcomes: students with positive perceptions show measurable improvement, while those with negative perceptions tend to stagnate even

under the same learning conditions. Hence, understanding perception differences becomes essential to ensuring program effectiveness.

Fian (2024) further asserts that program success is not determined solely by the quality of materials or teacher competence but also by students' acceptance of the learning process. When students perceive learning as monotonous or irrelevant, the program's impact diminishes. In other words, pedagogical innovation must go hand in hand with the cultivation of positive perceptions to achieve expected learning outcomes.

From a broader educational perspective, this topic aligns with national efforts to enhance the quality of secondary education as a preparatory stage for higher and professional education, including civil service schools Nurhasanah et al. (2024). Effective supplementary learning supports not only academic achievement but also develops analytical thinking, digital literacy, and problem-solving abilities—all essential in CAT-based assessments and future career readiness.

The increasing demand for civil service preparation courses and the rapid growth of online tutoring platforms demonstrate the rising awareness of students toward competitive exam readiness. However, as noted by Fian (2024), this trend also raises concerns about inequality between students who can afford private tutoring and those who depend solely on school-based support. This disparity emphasizes the need to evaluate school-provided supplementary learning programs to ensure they are equitable and impactful.

A critical issue emerging from this context is the gap between school initiatives and students' perceived effectiveness of supplementary learning. Many schools assume that a greater quantity of supplementary sessions automatically results in better outcomes. Yet, Dewi, (2024) notes that excessive workload may trigger stress and demotivation. Factors such as learning styles, time management, and psychological readiness shape how students perceive and respond to the additional workload. Therefore, before intensifying such programs, schools must first

identify how students value and experience these initiatives.

This gap in understanding forms the research gap of this study. Although previous studies Rozania et al. (2019) have highlighted the role of perception in learning effectiveness, very few have specifically examined students' perceptions of supplementary learning for civil service preparation at the high school level, especially within formal school programs such as Al Azhar Superior High School's civil service class. This limited evidence provides a strong rationale for conducting a focused investigation in this context.

In response to this gap, the present research seeks to explore how students perceive supplementary learning activities designed to prepare them for civil service examinations and how these perceptions relate to their sense of readiness and improvement in test performance. This exploration is essential not only for evaluating the school's current program but also for generating insights that can guide other institutions in developing contextually relevant and student-centered supplementary learning designs (Mustari, 2022).

Based on this rationale, this study aims to answer three key questions:

1. How do students perceive the supplementary learning provided in the civil service class at Al Azhar Superior High School, Medan?
2. To what extent do students perceive that the supplementary learning influences their readiness and test performance?
3. What factors shape students' perceptions of the program's effectiveness?

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive quantitative approach, a research approach that aims to describe phenomena systematically, factually, and accurately regarding the facts, characteristics, and relationships between the variables studied. According to Sugiyono (2020), descriptive quantitative research is used to analyze data in numerical form which is then interpreted to provide meaning to social or educational phenomena. This approach is not intended to find cause-and-effect

relationships, but to describe the actual situation that occurs in the field based on numerical data. In this context, the research focuses on students' perceptions of additional learning and its relationship to improving official test scores. This approach aligns with the opinion of Pettalongi et al. (2017) who explain that descriptive research is used to obtain factual and accurate information about current conditions and describe relationships between educational phenomena without manipulating variables.

This research was conducted at Al Azhar High School in Medan, one of the leading schools in Medan City and offering a formal class program, or civil service class. This program aims to prepare students for civil service school exams, specifically the Basic Competency Selection (SKD) stage based on the Computer Assisted Test (CAT). This school was chosen as the research location because it already offers structured additional learning activities such as evening tutoring, CAT simulations, and intensive study consultation sessions

The research population is all grade XII students of Al Azhar Superior High School Medan. The total sample population in this study is 30 students, consisting of 14 male students and 16 female students, who actively participate in additional learning activities.

Data was collected using a closed questionnaire based on the likert scale (1-5), which consisted of several indicators as follows: students' perception of additional learning materials and methods, perception of the role of teachers or supervisors, perception of the effectiveness of additional learning in improving understanding of official test materials, perception of the impact of additional learning in improving understanding of official test material, perception of the impact of additional learning in improving understanding of official test material, perception of the impact of additional learning on the value of try out or CAT Exercise. The data obtained from the results of the questionnaire distribution was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the help of data processing programs such as Microsoft Exel or SPSS. The techniques used include: Calculation of average scores, percentage of respondent responses, categorization of data

based on the classification of perceptions (very positive, positive, neutral, negative, very negative) (Putu, 2024).

4,20-5,00	Very positive
3,40-4,19	Positive
2,60-3,39	Moderate/Neutral
1,80-2,59	Negative
1,00-1,79	Very Negative

Table 1. Data interpretation is carried out based on score guidelines

Average score range	Category Persepsia
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Table 2. Students' Perception of Additional Learning in Improving Official Test Scores

No	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
A. Perception of Additional Learning Materials and Methods						
1.	The material presented in the supplementary learning is easy to understand.					
2.	The teaching methods in the additional classes are interesting and not boring.					
3.	Additional learning is in accordance with the needs of preparation for the official test.					
B. Perception of the Role of Teachers/Supervisors						
4.	The teacher/supervisor provides an easy-to-understand explanation.					
5.	The teacher/supervisor provides motivation during the additional learning process.					
C. Perception of Effectiveness in Understanding Official Test Materials						
6.	After taking additional classes, I understood the official test material better.					
7.	Additional learning helped me in answering SKD questions.					
D. Perception of the Impact on Try Out Score / CAT Simulation						
8.	My try out scores increased after participating in additional learning.					
9.	I am more confident in facing the official test after taking additional classes.					
E. General Perception						
10.	Additional learning programs should be continued and improved.					

Before use, the research instrument is first tested through **validity and reliability tests** to ensure its feasibility. The validity test was carried out using **Pearson's Product Moment** correlation technique, where each statement item is declared valid if *the value of r is calculated > r of the table* (0.361) at a significance level of 5%. The results of the validity test are shown in table 2.

Table 3. Results of the Validity Test of Student Perception Instruments for Additional Learning

Statement	r Hitung	r Tabel ($\alpha = 0,05; n = 30$)	Keterangan
1	0,63	0,361	Valid
2	0,71	0,361	Valid
3	0,78	0,361	Valid
4	0,82	0,361	Valid
5	0,67	0,361	Valid
6	0,74	0,361	Valid
7	0,65	0,361	Valid
8	0,59	0,361	Valid
9	0,48	0,361	Valid
10	0,69	0,361	Valid

Furthermore, the **reliability test** was performed using **Cronbach's Alpha formula**, which aims to determine the internal consistency between statements in the instrument, shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of the Reliability Test of Student Perception Instruments

No	Measured Aspects	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Criteria
1	Perception of the material and methods	3	0,85	(Reliable)
2	Perception of the role of teachers/supervisors	2	0,83	(Reliable)
3	Perception of learning effectiveness	2	0,81	(Reliable)
4	Perception of the impact on try out value	2	0,86	(Reliable)
5	General perception of the sustainability of the program	1	-	-
Total Instruments		10 item	0,87	Reliable

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of the research were obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to 30 respondents who were students of the official class at Al Azhar Superior High School Medan. Based on the results of data processing, an overall average perception score of 4.14 was obtained which was included in the positive category. This shows that in general, students have a good perception of additional learning carried out in official classes. A summary of the results of obtaining student perception scores is shown in table 4.

Table 5. Results of Students' Perception of Additional Learning in Improving Official Test Scores

No	Brief Statement	Average Score	Category
1	Easy-to-understand material	4.2	Very Positive
2	Interesting methods	4.0	Positive

No	Brief Statement	Average Score	Category
3	Materials as needed	4.3	Very Positive
4	Teacher's explanation is easy to understand	4.4	Very Positive
5	Teachers motivate	4.1	Positive
6	Understand SKD material better	4.0	Positive
7	Able to answer SKD questions	3.9	Positive
8	Increased try out value	3.8	Positive
9	More confidence	4.2	Very Positive
10	The program is eligible to continue	4.5	Very Positive
Average		4.14	Positive

Discussion

Overall average score of 4.14 (Positive Category). The majority of students find that additional learning is beneficial, especially in helping them understand the material and boost confidence. Based on the results of the analysis of questionnaire data on 30 respondents, an average overall score of 4.14 was obtained, which is included in the "Positive" category. This shows that students' perception of additional learning in improving official test scores is relatively good, even in some indicators it is classified as very positive.

The highest scores were found in the statements "The program is worth continuing" (4.5) and "The teacher's explanation is easy to understand" (4.4), which indicates that students not only feel helped academically, but also realize the importance of the sustainability of the program. High scores on the statements "More confident" (4.2) and "Material as needed" (4.3) showed a strengthening in terms of affective and relevance of learning content to the needs of official tests.

These results are in line with Novanca et al. (2025) who stated that positive perceptions of learning contribute greatly to increasing student motivation and participation in learning, which ultimately has an impact on improving learning outcomes. In addition, Utami & Widiastuti (2025) emphasized that additional learning designed according to students' needs has the potential to increase readiness for

competitive exams, such as the SKD test which is the focus of this study.

A score that is also quite high is found in the statements "Able to answer SKD questions" (3.9) and "Try out value increases" (3.8). Although not as high as other indicators, this score is still relatively positive and shows that students experience additional learning benefits directly to their academic performance, although there is still room for the development of more effective methods.

Research by Jufri et al. (2024) also supports these findings. They found that the more positive students' perceptions of supplementary learning methods (both online and offline) were, the higher their levels of satisfaction and academic achievement. Therefore, supplementary learning that is well-received by students will increase active engagement and self-confidence, two important components in facing official school entrance exams. Therefore, it can be concluded that students' positive perceptions of supplementary learning are an important factor in improving their academic readiness and performance, especially in the context of facing competitive official exams.

In general, the results of this study indicate that supplementary learning at Al Azhar High School in Medan has a positive impact on students' readiness for civil service exams. Positive student perceptions indicate that the program has been effective, particularly in terms of improving material understanding and self-confidence. According to Kamalia & El-Yunusi (2024), positive perceptions of learning will encourage students to be more active,

diligent, and responsible in the learning process. Therefore, the success of supplementary learning is measured not only by improved test scores but also by increased student motivation and self-confidence.

This finding also supports the perception theory proposed by Alimuddin & Arifin (2024), which states that a person's perception of an activity significantly determines their behavior and response to it. If students have a positive perception of additional learning, they will be more enthusiastic about participating in learning activities, manage their study time better, and demonstrate higher academic performance.

Contextually, these findings are relevant to efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, particularly in preparing students for the highly competitive civil service school selection exams. According to Nurhasanah et al. (2024), improving educational quality can be achieved if schools are able to provide supplementary learning that is adaptive to students' needs and fosters positive perceptions of learning activities. Therefore, the results of this study provide practical contributions to schools in designing supplementary learning programs that are more focused, efficient, and tailored to student characteristics.

The results of this study concluded that students' perceptions of supplementary learning were positive, with an average score of 4.14. Students assessed that this activity was effective in helping them understand the material, boosting their confidence, and strengthening their preparation for official exams. However, improvements in academic performance can still be optimized through the development of more varied learning methods and increasing the intensity of practice questions. Overall, supplementary learning has proven to play a significant role in supporting student success, both academically and psychologically.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that students' perception of additional learning in improving official test scores is in the positive category with an average score of 4.14. This shows that the

majority of students consider additional learning programs useful, both in terms of understanding the material, increasing confidence, and readiness to face official tests. The indicators with the highest scores were the sustainability of the program and the clarity of the teacher's explanations, which emphasized the importance of the role of educators in guiding students. Meanwhile, the indicator of increasing the try out score obtained a relatively lower score, so it is still necessary to develop a more effective learning strategy to optimize academic results. Overall, these findings confirm that positive student perceptions are a key factor in the success of additional learning, and can be used as a reference for schools in designing programs that are more in line with students' needs and learning styles to increase their chances of success in official school selection.

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