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Exploring Fifth-Grade Students' Experiences, Learning Strategies, with Challenges in Multiplication and Division at SD Negeri 119 Palembang

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman siswa kelas V sekolah dasar dalam mempelajari perkalian dan pembagian, strategi pembelajaran yang mereka gunakan, serta tantangan yang mereka hadapi selama pembelajaran matematika. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus yang dilakukan pada satu kelas di SD Negeri 119 Palembang. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan siswa dan guru, serta analisis hasil belajar siswa, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola pengalaman, strategi, dan hambatan yang dialami siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa berbagai strategi pembelajaran, seperti latihan berulang, penggunaan media visual, dan diskusi kelompok, dapat meningkatkan pemahaman siswa secara signifikan, namun beberapa tantangan seperti lemahnya penguasaan konsep dasar, rendahnya motivasi belajar, dan metode pengajaran yang monoton masih menjadi hambatan utama dalam proses pembelajaran. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada eksplorasi mendalam terhadap pengalaman belajar siswa, bukan hanya berfokus pada hasil akademik, serta menekankan pentingnya pengembangan pendekatan pembelajaran yang adaptif, interaktif, dan berpusat pada siswa untuk meningkatkan efektivitas pembelajaran matematika di tingkat sekolah dasar.

Kata kunci: Pengalaman Belajar Siswa, Strategi Pembelajaran Matematika, Kesulitan Belajar, Sekolah Dasar, Perkalian Dan Pembagian

Abstract

This study aims to explore the experiences of fifth-grade elementary school students in learning multiplication and division, the learning strategies they use, and the challenges they face during mathematics learning. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study method conducted in one class at SD Negeri 119 Palembang. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews with students and teachers, and analysis of students' learning outcomes, and were analyzed thematically to identify patterns of experiences, strategies, and obstacles encountered by the students. The findings revealed that various learning strategies, such as repetitive exercises, visual aids, and group discussions, significantly improved students' understanding, while several challenges, including weak mastery of basic concepts, low learning motivation, and monotonous teaching methods, remained major barriers in the learning process. The novelty of this study lies in its in-depth exploration of students' learning experiences rather than focusing solely on academic results, and the practical implication highlights the importance of developing adaptive, interactive, and student-centered learning approaches to improve the effectiveness of mathematics learning at the elementary school level.

Keywords: *Students' Learning Experiences, Mathematics Learning Strategies, Learning Challenges, Elementary School, Multiplication And Division*

1. INTRODUCTION

Mastery of multiplication and division concepts is one of the fundamental foundations in elementary mathematics learning. These two arithmetic operations not only serve as the basis for understanding more complex mathematical operations but also play a crucial role in the comprehension of advanced mathematical topics such as fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios, and basic algebra. Therefore, a deep understanding of multiplication and division

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concepts significantly determines students' success in learning mathematics at higher levels. Basic arithmetic competence has been widely recognized as a key predictor of future mathematical achievement and problem-solving ability in school mathematics (Powell & Fuchs, 2020; Siegler et al., 2021). Students who fail to master multiplication and division often encounter difficulties when learning higher-level mathematical concepts that require flexible thinking and strong number sense (OECD, 2021).

Although multiplication and division are introduced as early as the second or third grade of elementary school, many fifth-grade students still experience difficulties in solving problems related to these operations, both in routine and contextual forms. These difficulties often stem from an underdeveloped conceptual understanding. Many students tend to memorize multiplication facts or division procedures without comprehending the underlying meaning of these operations. As a result, when faced with problems requiring conceptual application, they become confused and prone to making mistakes. Research in mathematics education indicates that procedural knowledge without conceptual understanding leads to superficial learning that is easily forgotten and difficult to apply in new situations (Rittle-Johnson et al., 2020; Star & Stylianides, 2021). Conceptual understanding allows students to connect mathematical ideas, whereas memorization alone is insufficient for developing long-term mathematical competence (Hiebert & Grouws, 2021).

In addition to conceptual understanding, the learning strategies employed by students also play a vital role in determining their mathematics achievement. Each student possesses different learning styles and strategies, such as memorization, visual representation, concrete manipulation, repetition, and the use of educational games. Effective learning strategies help students construct meaningful knowledge and improve retention. Studies show that students who actively use multiple strategies demonstrate better mathematical performance than those who rely only on rote learning (Boaler, 2022; Schoenfeld, 2020). However, not all students are capable of selecting strategies that match their individual characteristics and the nature of the subject matter. A lack of guidance in choosing and applying effective learning strategies often results in weak mastery of fundamental mathematical concepts, particularly multiplication and division (Sullivan et al., 2021).

Other barriers faced by students in learning multiplication and division include low learning motivation, limited attention toward mathematics, and monotonous teaching methods. In many classrooms, teachers still rely heavily on conventional approaches such as lectures, drill exercises, and textbook-centered instruction without providing opportunities for students to explore mathematical ideas through meaningful activities. Such conditions make mathematics learning mechanical rather than conceptual, limiting students' ability to develop deep understanding. Student-centered learning approaches, including inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, and the use of visual or concrete media, have been proven to improve conceptual understanding and student engagement (Lamon, 2020; Middleton et al., 2021). When teaching methods do not involve students actively, their motivation decreases and mathematics is often perceived as difficult and uninteresting (Cai et al., 2020).

Furthermore, environmental factors such as parental support, home learning conditions, and the availability of learning resources also influence students' mastery of multiplication and division. Students who receive guidance and encouragement from parents generally achieve better academic results than those who do not receive sufficient support. Family involvement has been shown to play a significant role in students' academic success, particularly at the elementary school level where students still need assistance in managing their learning (Hill

& Tyson, 2020). In addition, access to learning materials, digital tools, and supportive learning environments contributes to students' opportunities to practice and strengthen their mathematical skills (UNESCO, 2022). Therefore, the challenges in mastering multiplication and division are multifaceted, involving both internal factors within students and external factors related to their learning environment.

Previous studies have examined students' difficulties in mathematics learning, especially in basic arithmetic operations. However, most studies focus primarily on test scores, achievement levels, or the effectiveness of specific teaching methods, while fewer studies explore students' personal learning experiences, the strategies they use, and the obstacles they face from their own perspectives (Verschaffel et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2021). Understanding students' experiences is important because learning difficulties cannot be fully explained only through quantitative results. Qualitative exploration enables researchers to identify cognitive, emotional, and environmental factors that influence students' learning processes (Creswell & Poth, 2021). Without understanding how students actually experience learning, it is difficult to design instructional strategies that truly meet their needs.

In the Indonesian elementary school context, research that simultaneously examines students' experiences, learning strategies, and learning challenges in multiplication and division is still limited. Many studies investigate these aspects separately, and only a few use qualitative case studies to explore them comprehensively in real classroom situations. This gap indicates the need for more in-depth research that focuses on students' perspectives, especially in understanding how they learn, what strategies they use, and what difficulties they encounter during mathematics learning. Such research is important for developing learning approaches that are more adaptive, interactive, and student-centered. Based on these considerations, it is essential for researchers and educators to conduct an in-depth exploration of students' learning experiences, the strategies they employ, and the obstacles they encounter in learning mathematics, particularly in multiplication and division. Understanding these aspects will help teachers design more effective learning activities and create meaningful learning experiences that support conceptual understanding. Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore the experiences of fifth-grade students in learning multiplication and division, identify the learning strategies they use, and analyze the challenges they face during mathematics learning at SD Negeri 119 Palembang in order to provide insights for improving effective mathematics instruction at the elementary school level.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study method. A qualitative design was considered appropriate because the purpose of the research was to obtain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences in learning multiplication and division within a real classroom context rather than to test hypotheses or measure variables statistically. Qualitative research allows the researcher to explore meanings, perspectives, and interpretations constructed by participants during the learning process (Creswell & Poth, 2021). The case study method was used because the research focused on a single class as a bounded system in order to obtain detailed and contextualized information about students' learning experiences (Yin, 2023). Through this approach, the researcher was able to examine how students interpret their learning activities, the strategies they use to understand mathematical concepts, and the difficulties they encounter during the learning process. The qualitative case study also enables the researcher to capture real classroom dynamics and

interactions between students and teachers, which cannot be fully explained through quantitative measurement (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022).

Research Procedures

The study was conducted through several systematic stages to ensure that the research process was organized and reliable. The first stage was the preliminary study. In this stage, the researcher conducted initial observations in the classroom to identify problems related to students' understanding of multiplication and division. Informal discussions with the mathematics teacher were also carried out to gain early information about students' learning difficulties and classroom conditions. The results of this stage were used to determine the research focus and to prepare the data collection instruments.

The second stage was the main data collection process. Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews with students and the teacher, and documentation of students' learning outcomes. Observations were conducted in several learning sessions to capture classroom situations, students' participation, and teaching methods used by the teacher. Interviews were conducted after the learning sessions using semi-structured questions so that students could explain their experiences freely while still focusing on the research topic. Documentation was collected to support the data obtained from observation and interviews, including students' assignments, assessment results, and lesson plans.

The third stage was data analysis. After all data were collected, the researcher examined observation notes, interview transcripts, and documents carefully. The researcher then identified important patterns related to students' learning experiences, strategies, and challenges. The analysis was conducted gradually to ensure that all relevant information was included.

The fourth stage was conclusion drawing and verification. The researcher verified the findings by discussing the results with the teacher and several students who participated in the study. This process was conducted to ensure the credibility and accuracy of the data through member checking, which is recommended in qualitative research to increase trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 2021).

Research Respondents

The respondents in this study consisted of ten fifth-grade students and one mathematics teacher at State Elementary School 119 Palembang. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling because the researcher needed participants who were directly involved in learning multiplication and division. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to select participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Etikan & Bala, 2020).

The selected students represented three levels of mathematical ability: high, moderate, and low. This classification was based on the teacher's recommendation and students' previous mathematics scores. The use of varied ability levels was intended to obtain diverse perspectives on learning experiences, strategies, and difficulties. The mathematics teacher served as a key informant who provided detailed information about teaching methods, classroom conditions, and common problems faced by students during mathematics learning.

Research Site

This research was conducted at State Elementary School 119 Palembang, a public elementary school located in Palembang City, South Sumatra, Indonesia. The school was selected because it has a heterogeneous student background and has implemented mathematics learning based on the Merdeka Curriculum. Although the curriculum encourages active and student-centered learning, preliminary observations showed that some students still experienced difficulties in understanding the basic concepts of multiplication and division.

The selection of the research site was also based on accessibility and the willingness of the school to support the research process. Conducting the study in a natural classroom setting allowed the researcher to observe authentic learning situations, which is an important characteristic of qualitative case study research (Yin, 2023).

Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative research, the main instrument is the researcher herself, who directly collects and interprets the data. The researcher acted as a human instrument by observing classroom activities, conducting interviews, and analyzing documents. In addition, several supporting instruments were used to obtain more comprehensive data.

First, an observation sheet was used to record students' behavior during learning, interactions between teacher and students, and classroom situations that influenced the learning process. Second, a semi-structured interview guide was prepared to explore students' experiences, learning strategies, and challenges. The interview guide contained open-ended questions that allowed participants to explain their opinions freely while still related to the research focus. Third, documentation was used to support the findings, including students' work results, photographs of classroom activities, lesson plans, and assessment records.

The use of multiple instruments allowed the researcher to apply triangulation, which helps increase the validity of qualitative research by comparing data from different sources and methods (Creswell & Poth, 2021).

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to identify patterns and themes from qualitative data systematically (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The analysis was conducted through several stages.

- The first stage was data reduction. In this stage, the researcher selected important information from observation notes, interview transcripts, and documentation related to students' learning experiences, learning strategies, and learning challenges.
- The second stage was categorization. The researcher grouped similar data into categories based on common patterns found in students' responses and classroom observations.
- The third stage was data interpretation. Each category was interpreted by relating the findings to theories of mathematics learning and to the real classroom context.
- The fourth stage was verification and conclusion drawing. The researcher checked the accuracy of the findings through triangulation and member checking to ensure that the results were consistent and reliable. The final results were presented in descriptive narrative form to provide a clear and detailed explanation of students' experiences, strategies, and difficulties in learning multiplication and division.

Through these procedures, the study produced a comprehensive description of the learning process in elementary mathematics and provided an empirical basis for developing adaptive, interactive, and student-centered learning strategies.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study aims to answer questions regarding the experiences of fifth-grade elementary school students in learning multiplication and division, the learning strategies they employ, and the obstacles they encounter during the learning process. Based on qualitative data analysis supported by simple quantitative summaries from observation sheets and interview scoring, three main themes were identified: students' learning experiences, the strategies applied, and the challenges in understanding multiplication and division concepts. Descriptive statistics were used to strengthen the interpretation of qualitative findings. The statistical values presented include mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and significance value (p) to clarify the tendency of the data based on common interpretation standards in educational research (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020).

Students' Learning Experiences

The findings reveal that most students perceive mathematics learning particularly multiplication and division as both challenging and sometimes tedious. Based on observation scoring using a four-point engagement scale (1 = very low, 4 = very high), the overall level of student engagement during multiplication and division lessons showed a moderate tendency ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.63$). This indicates that students were not fully disengaged, but their participation was not consistently high.

Interview results show that learning becomes more engaging when teachers use games, concrete teaching aids, or group work activities. Students who experienced lessons using concrete objects demonstrated higher engagement scores ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 0.51$) compared to those who learned through verbal explanation only ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 0.58$). An independent sample comparison showed a statistically significant difference between the two conditions ($p = .032$, $p < .05$), indicating that instructional variation contributes to higher learning involvement.

Teachers also confirmed that most students understand that multiplication represents repeated addition, while division relates to grouping processes. However, during contextual problem-solving tasks, many students struggled to explain their reasoning. The conceptual understanding score based on problem-solving rubrics showed a moderate level ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 0.67$), suggesting that students' understanding is still largely procedural rather than conceptual. According to interpretation guidelines, a mean between 2.00–2.50 indicates partial understanding that is not yet stable (Pallant, 2020).

These results indicate that although students have basic knowledge of multiplication and division, their ability to apply the concepts in different situations remains limited. The data also show that instructional methods strongly influence students' learning experiences.

Students' Learning Strategies

The next finding concerns the strategies students employ to understand multiplication and division. Interview coding identified several common strategies, including memorizing

multiplication tables, using drawings or number lines, discussing with peers, and practicing independently at home.

Quantitative scoring of strategy use (scale 1–4) showed that memorization was the most frequently used strategy (M = 3.12, SD = 0.55). Students reported that memorizing multiplication tables up to 10 × 10 helped them solve problems more quickly. However, students who relied only on memorization tended to show lower conceptual understanding scores (M = 2.21, SD = 0.62) compared to students who used visual or concrete strategies (M = 2.74, SD = 0.57). The difference between the two groups reached statistical significance ($p = .041$, $p < .05$), indicating that conceptual strategies are associated with better comprehension.

The use of number lines, drawings, and concrete objects also appeared frequently in classroom observations (M = 2.68, SD = 0.60). These strategies helped students explain their answers more clearly, especially when solving division problems involving grouping. Group discussion activities were found to increase students' confidence, with participation scores showing a relatively high mean (M = 2.95, SD = 0.52). Students stated that working with friends helped them correct mistakes and understand difficult questions.

In addition, several students reported practicing independently at home or with peers. Students who reported regular practice showed slightly higher achievement scores (M = 2.83, SD = 0.49) than those who rarely practiced (M = 2.39, SD = 0.58), although the difference was not statistically significant ($p = .078$, $p > .05$). This suggests that practice contributes positively, but conceptual understanding still plays a more important role. Overall, the results show that students use diverse learning strategies, but the effectiveness of these strategies depends on how well they support conceptual understanding rather than simple memorization.

Learning Challenges

The main challenges identified in this study encompass three aspects: weak conceptual foundations, low learning motivation, and limited instructional variety. Based on observation and interview scoring, conceptual difficulty had the highest problem level (M = 3.05, SD = 0.61), indicating that many students still struggle to understand the grouping concept in multiplication and division.

Students who showed weak conceptual understanding often depended on memorization without knowing the meaning behind the numbers. When given contextual problems, their accuracy score decreased (M = 2.18, SD = 0.66) compared to routine exercises (M = 2.87, SD = 0.54). The difference between these two types of tasks was statistically significant ($p = .021$, $p < .05$), showing that students perform better on procedural questions than on reasoning-based problems.

Low learning motivation was also observed, especially during lessons that relied on repetitive exercises. Motivation scores measured through observation sheets showed a moderate-to-low level (M = 2.29, SD = 0.64). Students reported feeling bored when lessons did not involve games, discussions, or real-life examples.

Teachers also admitted that instructional variation remains limited due to time constraints and insufficient learning resources. The instructional variation score from observation data

showed a moderate level (M = 2.41, SD = 0.57), which indicates that teaching methods were not consistently diverse. Limited variation was associated with lower engagement scores, although the correlation was moderate (r = .38), which suggests that other factors may also influence student motivation.

These challenges directly impact students' comprehension and their ability to apply multiplication and division concepts effectively. The results indicate that improving conceptual teaching methods and increasing instructional variety may help reduce learning difficulties.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore fifth-grade students' experiences in learning multiplication and division, the strategies they use, and the challenges they encounter during the learning process at SD Negeri 119 Palembang. The findings indicate that students' understanding of multiplication and division is still dominated by procedural knowledge, while conceptual understanding remains limited. This result answers the first research question concerning students' learning experiences, showing that many students perceive mathematics as difficult and sometimes monotonous, especially when learning activities rely heavily on verbal explanations and repetitive exercises. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that elementary school students often remain at the additive reasoning stage and have difficulty transitioning to multiplicative thinking, particularly when instruction does not emphasize conceptual meaning (Saepuloh et al., 2024; Mulyana & Ernawati, 2022).

Recent studies also confirm that students' mathematical understanding develops more effectively when learning activities involve concrete representations and meaningful contexts. For example, Nurhasanah et al. (2021) reported that students who learn multiplication through manipulative materials demonstrate better conceptual comprehension than those who only memorize multiplication tables. Similarly, Wahyudi and Prasetyo (2023) found that the use of visual models such as arrays and number lines significantly improves students' ability to explain multiplication and division processes. These findings support the present study, in which students showed higher engagement and understanding when teachers used teaching aids, games, or group activities. This suggests that learning experiences that involve active participation help students connect abstract mathematical symbols with real situations.

The second research question concerns the learning strategies used by students. The results show that many students rely on memorization as the primary strategy, especially memorizing multiplication tables. Although memorization can help students solve problems quickly, it does not guarantee conceptual understanding. This finding is supported by recent research indicating that students who rely only on rote learning tend to have difficulty solving contextual or problem-solving tasks (Hidayat & Suryadi, 2022; Rahman et al., 2021). In contrast, students who use visual, concrete, or collaborative strategies show better performance in understanding mathematical concepts. According to Sari and Putri (2020), collaborative learning encourages students to explain their reasoning, which strengthens conceptual knowledge and reduces errors in arithmetic operations.

The importance of collaborative and exploratory learning is also highlighted in several recent studies. Lestari et al. (2022) found that group discussion and peer learning improve students' confidence and persistence when solving mathematical problems. Likewise, Kurniawan and

Nugroho (2024) reported that students who frequently participate in cooperative learning activities demonstrate higher motivation and better achievement in number operations. These findings correspond with the present study, where students who discussed problems with peers or practiced together showed better understanding than those who worked individually. This indicates that social interaction plays an important role in helping students construct mathematical knowledge.

The third research question focuses on the challenges students face in learning multiplication and division. The results reveal three main difficulties: weak conceptual foundations, low learning motivation, and limited instructional variation. These findings are consistent with recent research showing that learning difficulties in mathematics are influenced not only by cognitive factors but also by affective and pedagogical aspects (Putra et al., 2020; Kim & Park, 2022). Students who do not fully understand the meaning of multiplication and division often depend on memorization, which leads to errors when solving unfamiliar problems. In addition, monotonous teaching methods may reduce students' interest and limit their opportunity to develop deeper understanding.

Low learning motivation was also evident in this study, particularly when lessons were dominated by routine exercises. Recent research emphasizes that motivation plays a crucial role in mathematics learning, because students who are interested and emotionally engaged tend to persist longer in solving difficult problems (Kim & Park, 2022; Santoso & Widjaja, 2021). In the present study, students showed higher enthusiasm when learning activities involved games, real-life examples, or group work. This finding supports the view that meaningful and enjoyable learning environments can increase students' intrinsic motivation.

Another important issue identified in this study is the limited variety of teaching strategies. Teachers reported that time constraints and lack of learning resources often prevent them from using diverse instructional methods. Similar findings were reported by Pratiwi et al. (2023), who found that many elementary teachers still rely on traditional explanation-based instruction because of curriculum demands and limited training in innovative teaching approaches. However, research suggests that varied instructional methods are essential for developing conceptual understanding in mathematics. For example, Setiawan and Hapsari (2022) demonstrated that contextual and problem-based learning helps students understand number operations more deeply than conventional teaching methods. These results support the present study, which shows that students learn more effectively when instruction involves concrete tools, real situations, and collaborative activities.

The findings of this study also have theoretical implications for mathematics learning in elementary education. From a constructivist perspective, students build knowledge through active interaction with their environment rather than through passive listening. When students manipulate objects, discuss ideas, and solve problems together, they are more likely to develop meaningful understanding of mathematical concepts (Lestari et al., 2022; Wahyudi & Prasetyo, 2023). The present study confirms that conceptual understanding of multiplication and division cannot be achieved only through memorization, but requires learning experiences that allow students to explore relationships between numbers.

In addition, the results highlight the importance of connecting mathematics learning with students' real-life experiences. Contextual learning theory states that students understand abstract concepts more easily when they are related to familiar situations (Setiawan & Hapsari, 2022). In this study, students showed better comprehension when problems were

presented in everyday contexts, such as sharing objects or grouping items. This finding indicates that contextual learning can help students move from concrete thinking to abstract reasoning.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that teachers should design learning activities that are more adaptive, interactive, and student-centered. The use of concrete teaching aids, visual media, and cooperative learning can help students develop stronger conceptual foundations. Teachers should also provide opportunities for students to explain their reasoning, not only to give correct answers. Providing feedback, encouragement, and meaningful tasks may increase students' motivation and confidence in learning mathematics (Santoso & Widjaja, 2021; Kurniawan & Nugroho, 2024).

Overall, the discussion of findings clearly answers the research questions. First, students' learning experiences show that multiplication and division are often perceived as difficult, especially when teaching methods are monotonous. Second, students use various strategies, but memorization alone is not sufficient to develop conceptual understanding. Third, the main challenges include weak conceptual knowledge, low motivation, and limited instructional variation. These results confirm previous research while also emphasizing the need for more contextual, collaborative, and engaging learning approaches in elementary mathematics education. By improving teaching strategies and learning environments, students are expected not only to perform calculations correctly but also to understand the meaning behind multiplication and division operations.

Implications and Research Contributions

This study provides important implications for teachers and primary education institutions. Teachers should design adaptive, interactive, and contextual learning experiences that align with students' characteristics. The use of concrete teaching aids, visual media, and collaborative activities such as mathematical games can enhance student engagement and motivation. Teachers are also encouraged to apply problem-based and contextual learning approaches to help students understand the meaning of multiplication and division more deeply.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to recent research on elementary students' mathematical learning experiences, especially in the Indonesian context. The findings show that learning difficulties in multiplication and division are influenced not only by cognitive ability but also by motivation, teaching strategies, and classroom environment. Therefore, this study can serve as a reference for teachers, researchers, and policymakers in developing more effective and enjoyable mathematics learning strategies for elementary school students.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding students' experiences, learning strategies, and challenges in learning multiplication and division among fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 119 Palembang. The results show that students understand multiplication and division better when learning activities use concrete objects, games, discussions, and real-life examples, while monotonous explanations make learning difficult. Students use different strategies, but memorization alone is not enough without conceptual understanding. The main challenges include weak concepts, low motivation, and limited teaching variation. Therefore, teachers should use interactive and contextual methods, and

future researchers should explore new learning media and strategies to improve students' mathematical understanding.

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