

Implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) Model to Enhance Students' Learning Interest in Physical Education: A Classroom Action Research Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to enhance students' learning interest through the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model in Physical Education, Sports, and Health among students of Class VIII F at SMPN 22 Surabaya. The research employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach conducted over two cycles, each consisting of the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The participants of the study were 36 students. Data were collected using a learning interest questionnaire based on a Likert scale, which encompassed indicators such as attention, interest, engagement, and enjoyment. The data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques presented in percentage form. The findings indicate a progressive improvement in students' learning interest across each cycle. In the pre-cycle stage, the percentage of students categorized as having high learning interest was 38%. This figure increased to 61% in Cycle I following the implementation of a 3 vs 3 mini passing game, and further rose significantly to 83% in Cycle II through the application of a 4 vs 4 tactical game with target zones. These results suggest that the TGfU model is effective in fostering a more interactive, enjoyable, and student-centered learning environment, thereby optimizing students' learning interest. Therefore, the TGfU model can be considered an effective alternative approach in Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction to improve students' learning interest.

Keywords: Teaching Games for Understanding, Classroom Action Research, Physical Education, Sports, and Health

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INTRODUCTION

Physical Education, Sports, and Health constitutes an integral component of the educational system, playing a crucial role in fostering students' physical, cognitive, affective, and social development in a holistic manner. Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction is not solely oriented toward the acquisition of motor skills; rather, it also aims to cultivate character, sportsmanship, and students' cognitive abilities within game-based activities. In practice, Physical Education, Sports, and Health content is delivered systematically through a combination of theoretical and practical approaches, tailored to students' developmental characteristics at each educational level (Mahendra & Subekti, 2024; Rohman et al., 2022). However, classroom realities indicate that Physical

Education, Sports, and Health instruction often remains conventional in nature and insufficiently engages students actively, which in turn affects the overall quality of the learning process (Sudarsono et al., 2025).

One prominent issue is the low level of students' learning interest in Physical Education, Sports, and Health. Learning interest is a critical factor influencing student engagement; learners with high interest tend to participate actively and enthusiastically, whereas those with low interest are more likely to be passive and less involved. Research by Saputro (2022) reveals that, within Physical Education, Sports, and Health learning contexts, some students demonstrate low levels of responsibility and discipline, reflecting limited engagement in the learning process. This condition highlights the need for instructional innovation to enhance both student interest and participation. In line with the demands of 21st-century education and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers are required to adopt innovative, creative, and student-centered instructional models.

One such model is Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) (Putra et al., 2024). This model emphasizes a game-based approach that enables students to understand tactical concepts prior to learning specific technical skills. Consequently, students develop not only motor competencies but also critical thinking and decision-making abilities within game situations. The TGfU model offers significant advantages in creating engaging and meaningful learning experiences. It encourages active student involvement in gameplay, collaborative discussion, and contextual understanding of game strategies. Furthermore, the use of game-based approaches in Physical Education, Sports, and Health has been shown to effectively improve learning outcomes, particularly when instructional activities are modified to suit students' needs.

A study by Aryaningtyas & Ismawandi B.P (2022) demonstrates that instructional modifications can significantly enhance students' motor skill learning outcomes. This finding suggests that innovative approaches such as TGfU hold strong potential to improve the overall quality of Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction. In addition, game-based instructional models have been found to increase students' motivation and active engagement. The development of game-oriented training models is considered an effective alternative strategy for teachers to enhance student participation in learning activities. Therefore, the TGfU model, which integrates gameplay with instructional objectives, represents a relevant solution for improving students' learning interest (Yuliawan et al., 2026). Despite its potential, the implementation of the TGfU model in junior high school Physical Education, Sports, and Health contexts remains suboptimal, particularly in terms of fostering students' learning interest.

Preliminary observations conducted at SMPN 22 Surabaya indicate that some students still exhibit low levels of interest in participating in Physical Education, Sports, and Health lessons. This is reflected in limited active participation, low enthusiasm, and suboptimal engagement during learning activities. Classroom Action Research (CAR) provides an appropriate approach to address this issue, as it enables teachers to systematically improve instructional practices through iterative cycles of action and reflection. By implementing the TGfU model in Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction, it is expected that students' learning interest can be enhanced through more interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experiences. Based on this rationale, the present study aims to examine the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model in improving students' learning interest in Physical Education,

Sports, and Health among Class VIII F students at SMPN 22 Surabaya. This study is expected to contribute to the development of innovative Physical Education, Sports, and Health instructional practices and serve as a reference for teachers in improving the quality of learning in schools.

METHOD

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design aimed at improving and enhancing the quality of the Physical Education, Sports, and Health learning process through the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model. CAR is a form of reflective inquiry conducted by teachers within their own classrooms to systematically refine instructional practices on an ongoing basis. The study followed the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of four key stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These stages were implemented cyclically until optimal improvements in students' learning interest were achieved (Nandifa et al., 2023).

The participants of this study were all students of Class VIII F at SMPN 22 Surabaya, totaling 36 students comprising both male and female learners. The selection of this class was based on preliminary observations indicating that students' learning interest in Physical Education, Sports, and Health was relatively low. This condition was reflected in limited student engagement during learning activities, low enthusiasm in participating in lessons, and a tendency for students to remain passive. Therefore, Class VIII F was selected as the research subject to receive instructional intervention through the application of the TGfU model. The study was conducted over two cycles, each consisting of several instructional meetings aligned with the CAR stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. During the planning phase, the researcher prepared instructional materials, including teaching modules, lesson plans, observation instruments, and a learning interest questionnaire adapted to the TGfU framework. In the action phase, the teacher implemented the TGfU model through structured stages, including initial games, tactical discussions, skill practice, and advanced gameplay within Physical Education, Sports, and Health lessons.

The observation phase involved monitoring students' activities and their level of learning interest throughout the instructional process. Finally, the reflection phase focused on evaluating the outcomes of the implemented actions, identifying shortcomings, and designing improvements for the subsequent cycle. The use of two cycles in this CAR study was intended to ensure gradual and sustained improvement in students' learning interest (Rahmawati et al., 2026). Data in this study were collected using a questionnaire designed to measure students' learning interest before and after the implementation of the TGfU model.

The instrument was specifically developed to assess the learning interest of Class VIII F students at SMPN 22 Surabaya in Physical Education, Sports, and Health learning contexts. It employed a four-point Likert scale consisting of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questionnaire was constructed based on four primary indicators of learning interest: attention, interest, engagement, and enjoyment. The attention indicator refers to students' ability to maintain focus and listen attentively to the teacher's explanations during the lesson. The interest indicator relates to students' curiosity and enthusiasm toward the game-based activities implemented in the learning process. The engagement indicator reflects students' active participation in gameplay as well as their involvement in discussions and tactical understanding. Meanwhile, the enjoyment indicator

is associated with students' emotional responses, such as feelings of pleasure and the absence of boredom during Physical Education, Sports, and Health lessons. Overall, the instrument consisted of 16 systematically arranged items to obtain comprehensive data on students' learning interest before and after the implementation of the TGfU model. Scoring was based on the Likert scale, where positive statements were assigned scores of 4 (strongly agree), 3 (agree), 2 (disagree), and 1 (strongly disagree), while negative statements were scored inversely. The total scores were then converted into percentages using the formula: (obtained score divided by maximum score multiplied by 100%) to classify students' learning interest into high, moderate, and low categories.

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques. Quantitative data from the learning interest questionnaire were presented in percentage form to determine the level of students' learning interest achievement in each cycle. The results of this analysis served as the basis for evaluating the success of the implemented actions in each research cycle (Ramadhan et al., 2023). The criteria for success in this study were defined by an improvement in students' learning interest during the Physical Education, Sports, and Health learning process. The study was considered successful if at least 75% of students reached the high category of learning interest and if a significant improvement was observed between Cycle I and Cycle II (Rahayu et al., 2023). The establishment of these success indicators is essential in CAR to assess the effectiveness of the instructional interventions applied.

RESULT

Pre Cycle

Table 1. Pre Cycle

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
High	14	38%
Medium	15	42%
Low	7	20%

In the pre-cycle phase, the Physical Education, Sports, and Health learning process in Class VIII F at SMPN 22 Surabaya was still conducted using a conventional, teacher-centered approach without the integration of a game-based learning model. The instructional content at this stage focused on basketball, particularly basic passing and dribbling techniques. However, the material was delivered primarily through lectures and demonstrations, without engaging students in contextualized game situations. This instructional approach resulted in relatively low levels of student learning interest. This was evident from students' limited attention during teacher explanations, minimal involvement in practical activities, and a lack of interaction among students throughout the learning process.

Moreover, several students appeared passive, merely following instructions without fully understanding the purpose of the activities. Data obtained from the learning interest questionnaire indicated that only 14 out of 36 students (38%) were categorized as having high learning interest, while 15 students (42%) fell into the moderate category and 7 students (20%) were classified as having low learning interest. These findings suggest that the existing instructional approach had not yet succeeded in creating an engaging and

meaningful learning environment. Therefore, instructional improvement was necessary through the implementation of a more innovative model, such as TGfU.

Cycle I

Table 2. Cycle I

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
High	22	61%
Medium	10	28%
Low	4	11%

In Cycle I, Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction began to incorporate the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model, focusing on basketball content with an emphasis on fundamental passing concepts and spatial awareness in gameplay. The lesson commenced with a modified activity in the form of a 3 vs 3 mini passing game conducted on a small court. In this activity, students were required to collaborate as a team by passing the ball to maintain possession, with minimal reliance on dribbling. Following the initial game, the teacher facilitated a tactical discussion by prompting students to reflect on the strategies they used to maintain possession and create open space. This was followed by skill practice sessions, where students practiced fundamental passing techniques, such as chest passes and bounce passes, in pairs.

Subsequently, students engaged in a follow-up game, applying the tactical insights and technical skills they had developed during the lesson. Observational findings indicated an improvement in student engagement compared to the pre-cycle phase. Students demonstrated increased activity levels, interaction, and teamwork within their groups. However, some students still exhibited a lack of confidence and had not yet fully grasped the underlying game concepts. Based on the questionnaire results, the number of students categorized as having high learning interest increased to 22 students (61%), while 10 students (28%) were in the moderate category and 4 students (11%) remained in the low category. Although this reflects a notable improvement, the results had not yet met the predetermined success criteria, indicating the need for further refinement and intervention in Cycle II.

Cycle II

Table 3. Cycle II

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
High	30	83%
Medium	5	14%
Low	1	3%

In Cycle II, Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction continued to implement the TGfU model with advanced basketball content, emphasizing decision-making and

offensive strategies, particularly in simplified game situations. The lesson began with a modified activity in the form of a 4 vs 4 tactical game incorporating target zones. In this activity, students were divided into groups and assigned the task of scoring points by successfully delivering the ball into designated target areas after completing at least three passes. This game was specifically designed to develop students' tactical thinking, teamwork, and spatial awareness within gameplay contexts. Subsequently, the teacher provided feedback and facilitated a discussion on effective offensive and defensive strategies. This was followed by skill practice that integrated passing, dribbling, and shooting techniques within simplified game scenarios. In addition, the teacher incorporated motivational strategies and positive reinforcement to enhance students' confidence and engagement during the learning process.

Observational results indicated a substantial improvement in student participation. Students became more active, enthusiastic, and confident in engaging with the learning activities, and demonstrated more effective collaboration within their teams. The results of the learning interest questionnaire revealed a significant increase, with 30 students (83%) categorized as having high learning interest, 5 students (14%) in the moderate category, and only 1 student (3%) in the low category. Therefore, the success criteria of the study were achieved, as more than 75% of students demonstrated a high level of learning interest.

Summary of Pre Cycle, Cycle I, Cycle II

Table 4. Summary of Cycle I & II

Stage	Interest Percentage
Pre Cycle	38%
Cycle I	61%
Cycle II	83%

Based on the overall findings of the study, it can be concluded that students' learning interest increased progressively from the pre-cycle phase to Cycle II. In the pre-cycle stage, students' learning interest was relatively low, with a percentage of 38%. This figure improved to 61% in Cycle I following the implementation of the TGfU model through simple, team-based game activities. A more substantial increase was observed in Cycle II, reaching 83%, after instructional refinements were made by incorporating more complex games that required deeper tactical understanding. These results indicate that the implementation of the TGfU model is effective in creating a more engaging, interactive, and meaningful learning environment for students.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model significantly enhances students' learning interest in Physical Education, Sports, and Health, particularly in basketball instruction. In the pre-cycle phase, the low level of students' learning interest was largely attributed to the use of

conventional teaching methods, where the teacher dominated the instructional process and students functioned primarily as passive recipients of information. This condition resulted in limited active engagement, which in turn affected students' attention, interest, and participation during the learning process. These findings are consistent with Yusuf et al. (2024), who reported that Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction lacking direct game-based activities tends to reduce students' interest and motivation due to the absence of meaningful learning experiences.

In Cycle I, the implementation of the TGfU model through a 3 vs 3 mini passing game began to positively influence student engagement. Students were not only practicing passing techniques but also developing an understanding of spatial awareness, teamwork, and basic decision-making in gameplay. The inclusion of tactical discussions following the game further enabled students to reflect on their learning experiences, thereby making the learning process more meaningful. The observed improvement in learning interest during Cycle I suggests that game-based approaches can effectively increase students' attention and involvement. This finding aligns with Gulo et al. (2025), who found that the application of the TGfU model in basketball learning enhances student activity and participation through contextual and interactive gameplay. Similarly, Sappaile et al. (2024) demonstrated that game-based approaches in Physical Education, Sports, and Health significantly improve student engagement, as learners feel more challenged and motivated during instruction. These findings support the results of Cycle I, which showed an increase in learning interest, although the predetermined success criteria had not yet been achieved.

In Cycle II, students' learning interest improved more substantially following instructional refinements through the implementation of a more complex 4 vs 4 tactical game with target zones. This activity provided students with opportunities to think more strategically in determining positioning, selecting passing options, and making decisions in game situations. Furthermore, the integration of passing, dribbling, and shooting techniques within a game context enabled students to better understand the relationship between technical skills and tactical strategies in basketball. The provision of motivation and positive reinforcement also contributed to enhancing students' confidence, encouraging them to participate more actively. These findings are in line with Khoirunnisa & Ahmad Syarif, (2026), who concluded that the TGfU model effectively improves students' tactical thinking and engagement in learning. Additionally, Riyanti & Fiteriani, (2025) It also indicates that the implementation of a game-based instructional model, combined with varied learning activities and motivational support, can significantly enhance students' learning interest, as students feel more engaged and less bored during the learning process. This finding supports the results of Cycle II, which demonstrated an increase in learning interest exceeding 75%. Overall, the results of this study reinforce the theoretical framework presented in the introduction, which posits that TGfU is a student centered instructional approach emphasizing experiential learning through games. This model not only enhances students' motor skills but also develops cognitive aspects through decision-making processes and affective aspects through teamwork and social interaction.

The findings are also consistent with Mujriah & Susilawati (2024), who reported that the TGfU model is effective in improving students' learning interest, motivation, and engagement in Physical Education, Sports, and Health comprehensively. In conclusion, the implementation of the TGfU model has been proven effective in enhancing students' learning interest in Physical Education, Sports, and Health, particularly in basketball instruction. These findings not only corroborate previous studies but also strengthen the

argument that game-based learning approaches represent a relevant and effective solution for improving the quality of Physical Education, Sports, and Health instruction in schools.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model proved effective in enhancing students' learning interest in Physical Education, Sports, and Health. Through contextual and game-based learning activities, the model fostered greater student attention, engagement, enjoyment, tactical thinking, collaboration, and active participation during the learning process. Therefore, TGfU can be considered an effective instructional alternative for increasing students' learning interest in Physical Education, Sports, and Health lessons.

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