International Journal of Essential Competencies in Education
https://journal-center.litpam.com/index.php/ijece/index

June 2024 Vol. 3, No. 1
e-ISSN: 2962-2131
pp. 77-105

Curiosity in Science Learning: A Systematic Literature Review

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Article Info	Abstract

Article History
Received: May 2024;
Revised: May 2024;
Published: June 2024

Keywords
Curiosity;
Science learning;
Learning outcomes;
Educational strategies;
Future research directions

This review systematically examines the role of curiosity in science learning, focusing on its influence on engagement, cognitive processes, and educational outcomes. A comprehensive literature search was conducted using databases such as Scopus, resulting in the selection of 40 peer-reviewed empirical studies published between 2019 and 2024. Inclusion and exclusion criteria ensured the relevance and rigor of the selected studies. The findings reveal that curiosity significantly enhances memory encoding and consolidation, motivates learners, and supports exploratory behavior. Specifically, studies indicated that curiosity-driven learning leads to improved attention and learning processes, resulting in better educational outcomes. Pedagogical strategies that foster curiosity, including the integration of large language models and innovative teaching tools, have been shown to effectively enhance student engagement and learning in science. Quantitative data from the reviewed studies demonstrate that curiosity-driven approaches lead to a 25% increase in student engagement and a 30% improvement in learning outcomes. The review underscores the importance of systematically integrating curiosity-enhancing strategies within pedagogy to create more engaging and effective educational experiences. Future research should focus on developing comprehensive measurement tools for assessing curiosity and conducting longitudinal studies to explore its long-term impact on academic achievement and skill development. Additionally, the exploration of modern technologies in enhancing curiosity-driven learning should be prioritized. Educators are encouraged to implement pedagogical strategies that stimulate curiosity to maintain and enhance student engagement and achievement in science learning.

https://doi.org/10.36312/ijece.v3i1.1918

How to Cite
Hunaepi, H., Suma, I. K., & Subagia, I. W. (2024). Curiosity in Science Learning: A Systematic Literature Review. *International Journal of Essential Competencies in Education*, *3*(1), 77–105. https://doi.org/10.36312/ijece.v3i1.1918

INTRODUCTION

Curiosity is a fundamental aspect of human psychology that plays a critical role in educational settings, particularly in the domain of science learning. It serves as both a motivational driver and a cognitive tool, enhancing learning processes and outcomes (Hunaepi et al., 2021; Suhirman et al., 2022). Understanding curiosity through various conceptual frameworks and exploring its implications in educational environments can provide valuable insights into its effectiveness in fostering deeper engagement and learning.

Curiosity can be categorized into two primary forms: state curiosity and trait curiosity. State curiosity is a temporary feeling that arises from specific situations, characterized by a desire to acquire new knowledge. This form of curiosity can be triggered by novel or ambiguous stimuli, leading individuals to seek information to resolve uncertainty. Conversely, trait curiosity is a lasting characteristic of an individual, reflecting a habitual inclination to seek out and engage with new experiences. Trait curiosity influences how individuals approach learning and information gathering over time.

The dual nature of curiosity, encompassing both state and trait dimensions, highlights its complexity in educational contexts. Research has shown that individuals with high levels of trait curiosity are more likely to engage in and benefit from learning activities that satisfy their intrinsic motivational drives. Furthermore, curiosity drives learners to explore beyond what is necessary, leading to enhanced understanding and retention of information.

In the realm of science education, curiosity plays a particularly significant role. The exploratory nature of science makes it an ideal domain for curiosity-driven learning approaches. Curiosity prompts students to delve into scientific inquiries and experiments, fostering a deeper engagement with the material. This engagement is crucial for the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential components of scientific literacy. Research has identified several methods for measuring curiosity, including the Curiosity and Exploration Inventory scale, which assesses the intensity and frequency of curious feelings and behaviors (Jirout & Klahr, 2012). However, accurately capturing the full extent of curiosity remains challenging due to discrepancies in definitions and its subjective nature (Koutstaal et al., 2022). Additionally, the interaction between curiosity and other psychological factors such as anxiety and self-efficacy complicates its measurement and interpretation in educational contexts (Beck, 2022; Litman, 2005).

Empirical evidence supports the positive relationship between curiosity and learning outcomes. Curiosity has been found to significantly enhance learning effectiveness, especially in problem-based learning environments that encourage independent questioning and problem-solving (Glogger-Frey et al., 2015; Witherby & Carpenter, 2022). Moreover, curiosity improves learning achievements by promoting attention-based processing, keeping learners engaged and motivated throughout the learning process (Schiefer et al., 2019).

Furthermore, fostering curiosity in educational settings leads to increased student engagement and retention. Curiosity drives the search for new knowledge and sustains interest over time, making learning experiences more rewarding and memorable (M. J. Kang et al., 2008; Oudeyer et al., 2016). This is particularly valuable in science education, where students often encounter complex concepts and engage in hands-on experiments. By cultivating a curiosity-driven learning environment, educators can enhance student participation and encourage in-depth exploration of scientific topics.

Curiosity not only initiates the learning process but also enriches it by enhancing engagement and understanding. Therefore, it is crucial for educational systems to establish environments that nurture and sustain curiosity. This can be achieved through pedagogical strategies that prioritize inquiry-based learning, provide opportunities for exploration, and encourage critical thinking and questioning. By doing so, educators can ensure that curiosity continues to play a vital role in promoting lifelong learning and adaptability among students, preparing them to tackle future challenges in an ever-evolving world. The exploration of curiosity in science learning is an important focus in educational research, as it plays a key role in fostering engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. In addition to motivating students to delve into scientific questions and concepts, curiosity also improves cognitive engagement and retention, leading to a deeper understanding of scientific knowledge.

Curiosity is increasingly recognized for its role in enhancing memory and learning in educational settings. The Prediction, Appraisal, Curiosity, and Exploration (PACE) framework, as introduced by Gruber and Ranganath (2019), explains how curiosity triggers engagement and significantly strengthens memory processes involving the hippocampus. This neural mechanism is essential for retaining and assimilating complex scientific information.

The impact of curiosity on scientific learning is further supported by conceptual analyses and empirical studies. For example, Dubey and Griffiths (2019) examine curiosity's rational analysis and emphasize its role in reconciling the demands of novelty and complexity in scientific pursuits. They underscore the importance of intellectual curiosity in driving the pursuit of knowledge and understanding in science. Similarly, (Jirout, 2020) highlights curiosity's significant role in promoting early scientific thinking, demonstrating how curiosity-driven questions improve cognitive processes and motivate learners to tackle scientific problems.

In practical educational contexts, it is crucial to distinguish between curiosity and situational interest to develop effective teaching strategies. Shin et al. (2023) advocate for educational approaches that stimulate both curiosity and interest, enhancing overall learning experiences and outcomes in science education. These nuanced insights into the dynamics of curiosity highlight its fundamental role in engaging students more deeply with scientific content. Empirical research supports the role of curiosity in facilitating science learning experiences (P. Wu et al., 2018). Their study shows how curiosity about inquiry-related topics increases student engagement and develops inquiry skills. This demonstrates that curiosity not only benefits learning engagement but also plays a broader role in developing essential scientific skills and competencies.

The exploration of curiosity in science learning is a cornerstone of educational research. It fosters engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Curiosity propels students to explore scientific questions and concepts, leading to enhanced cognitive engagement and retention. This facilitates a deeper comprehension and mastery of scientific knowledge. Therefore, it is crucial to systematically examine the effects of curiosity in science learning.

Curiosity is recognized for enhancing memory and learning processes. The PACE framework, developed by Gruber and Ranganath (2019), explains how curiosity triggers engagement and strengthens memory. This neural mechanism is essential for the retention and assimilation of complex scientific information.

The Significance and Novelty of the Current Study

The significance of curiosity in developing critical scientific skills is well-documented. Studies by (Chander, 2012) and Herianto & Wilujeng (2020) highlight the role of curiosity in fostering reasoning skills and enhancing generic science skills. These findings confirm that curiosity is not merely a facilitator of learning but a driving force behind comprehensive cognitive and skill development in science education. Given the robust evidence supporting the beneficial impacts of curiosity on memory, learning, and cognitive processes in science education, it is imperative to systematically explore this construct.

Studies by Gruber et al., (2014); and Kidd and Hayden (2015) have linked curiosity to improvements in memory encoding and motivation, which are essential for effective learning. Similarly, Gottlieb et al., (2013) and Oudeyer et al. (2016) provide insights into the neural and computational mechanisms of curiosity, elucidating how curiosity enhances learning and memory retention. However, these reviews primarily focus on the correlation between curiosity, memory consolidation, and potentially enhanced learning outcomes.

The novelty of this current review lies in its integration of the components of scientific curiosity within a science educational framework. This review systematically explores how these mechanisms can be translated into educational strategies that promote deeper engagement and improved learning outcomes, specifically in science education. Previous reviews have tended to focus on broader areas such as neuroscience, psychology, and general education, without a specific focus on the application of these findings within the context of science education.

Therefore, a systematic examination of curiosity in science learning is not only justified but essential. This review offers the potential to refine educational strategies and interventions aimed at maximizing student engagement and learning outcomes. By incorporating curiosity-enhancing pedagogies, as explored by researchers like Kasneci et al. (2023); and Siew and Ahmad (2023), educational practitioners can develop more effective approaches that engage students and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. The collective insights from these studies highlight the transformative potential of curiosity in education, particularly in the sciences, where engaging with complex and challenging content is crucial for academic and practical success.

The Previous Studies' Gaps

Despite the well-documented benefits of curiosity, measuring curiosity accurately remains a significant challenge due to its subjective nature. The diverse ways in which curiosity is defined and experienced complicate its assessment. Curiosity is multifaceted, encompassing various dimensions such as epistemic curiosity, perceptual curiosity, and social curiosity, each manifesting differently in individuals (Elban & Aslan, 2022). This diversity complicates the development of standardized measurement tools that effectively capture its nuances.

Furthermore, the dynamic nature of curiosity, characterized by fluctuations in intensity and focus over time, presents additional obstacles to accurate measurement (Patankar et al., 2022). Traditional assessment methods, such as questionnaires, may provide only a snapshot of an individual's curiosity at a specific moment, failing to capture its evolving nature and contextual dependencies (Patankar et al., 2022). Situational factors, personal interests, and environmental stimuli significantly influence curiosity, making it challenging to devise measurement instruments that account for these dynamic influences (Patankar et al., 2022).

Moreover, the overlap between curiosity and related constructs, such as intrinsic motivation, sensation seeking, and openness to experience, adds another layer of complexity to its measurement (Maureira & Kniestedt, 2018). Curiosity is often intertwined with these constructs, complicating the development of measurement tools that can isolate and assess curiosity as a distinct phenomenon accurately.

Additionally, the subjective interpretation of curiosity across different contexts and individuals introduces variability in measurement outcomes (Jirout et al., 2022) . Cultural differences, educational backgrounds, and personal experiences shape individuals' perceptions and expressions of curiosity, leading to diverse responses to measurement instruments (Jirout et al., 2022). This subjectivity underscores the need for culturally sensitive and contextually relevant approaches to measuring curiosity accurately across diverse populations.

The Importance of Scientific Curiosity

Curiosity is fundamental to the learning process, initiating and enriching it by enhancing engagement and understanding. Research shows that curiosity positively contributes to learning by increasing motivation, interest, critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills, and academic achievement (Hunaepi et al., 2021). It plays a crucial role in cognitive, social, affective, spiritual, and physical development, enabling individuals to acquire a broad set of knowledge, skills, and experiences (Özkan & Topsakal, 2020). Curiosity has been identified as a primary driver of the master adaptive learner, motivating students to identify knowledge gaps, engage in exploratory behavior, and participate in self-determined learning (Weiss, 2024).

Moreover, curiosity has been linked to memory enhancement through the activation of brain regions such as the hippocampus, prefrontal cortex, and ventral striatum (Gruber & Fandakova, 2021). It serves as a driving force for intrinsic motivation, encouraging individuals to explore behaviors and acquire new understanding and knowledge through observation (Nurdiana et al., 2023). The educational implications of curiosity are significant, with studies indicating that it aids learning and improves academic performance (Chen et al., 2022). Curiosity is considered essential for sustained engagement in learning, although stimulating it in educational contexts remains a challenge (Dubey et al., 2020).

In the context of education, curiosity is not only a cognitive instrument for acquiring knowledge but also a motivator for learning more (Menning, 2017). It is viewed as a knowledge emotion that provides the impetus to delve deeper into subjects and expand one's understanding (Wittebols, 2020). The value of curiosity in education lies in its ability to foster inquiry and knowledge development (Yun, 2018). Furthermore, curiosity has been associated with improved attention, memory, and retention, facilitating effective learning and scientific thinking (J. Kang, 2023a).

Studies have shown that students demonstrating curiosity, creativity, and motivation in educational environments are more likely to enhance their academic performance and achieve their educational objectives (Lobo, 2024). Choice has been found to boost curiosity, with implications for enhancing learning, memory, and motivation in educational settings (Verdugo et al., 2022). Curiosity can be induced through online platforms and has been linked to short-term learning outcomes in medical education (Ho et al., 2021). Additionally, curiosity has been recognized as a metacognitive skill that is crucial in educational contexts (Suhirman et al., 2022).

Curiosity not only initiates the learning process but also enriches it by fostering engagement, enhancing understanding, and promoting memory retention. It serves as a catalyst for motivation, critical thinking, and academic achievement, making it a vital component of effective learning strategies. Encouraging and nurturing curiosity in educational settings can lead to more profound knowledge acquisition, improved cognitive abilities, and overall academic success.

To investigate how different forms of curiosity influence science learning outcomes, it is crucial to consider the multifaceted nature of curiosity and its implications for educational settings. Scientific curiosity, characterized by a desire for scientific knowledge and exploration of science environments, plays a vital role in enhancing students' engagement and inquiry abilities in science education (Nagy et al., 2022). This form of curiosity motivates learners to seek information, make connections, and deepen their understanding of scientific concepts through active exploration and investigation (Jirout, 2020). By fostering scientific curiosity, educators can create learning environments that promote curiosity-driven inquiry and support students in developing critical thinking skills and scientific reasoning (Nurdiana et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the well-established relationship between curiosity and academic achievement in science learning indicates that high levels of curiosity are linked to increased interest, engagement, and performance in science subjects (Gitatenia & Lasmawan, 2022). Students who exhibit curiosity, self-confidence, and specific learning styles, such as kinesthetic learning, show a greater interest in science and are more likely to excel in science-related activities (Gitatenia & Lasmawan, 2022). Encouraging curiosity in science learning can lead to improved outcomes by stimulating students' interest, motivation, and active participation in scientific exploration (Zakirah & Widowati, 2024).

Inquiry-based learning approaches, which emphasize curiosity-driven investigation and hands-on experimentation, have been demonstrated to enhance students' scientific inquiry skills and promote a deeper understanding of scientific concepts (Saraçoğlu & Kahyaoğlu, 2018). By integrating story-based science literacy strategies and experimental projects, educators can harness students' natural curiosity to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences that foster a deeper appreciation for science and its applications in everyday life (Quro & Choiriyah, 2022). These approaches not only cultivate curiosity but also support the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and scientific reasoning skills (Meilani & Faradiba, 2019).

Moreover, the correlation between students' curiosity and their generic science skills underscores the significance of curiosity in shaping students' attitudes and abilities in science learning (Herianto & Wilujeng, 2020). Students with high levels of curiosity are more likely to demonstrate a strong interest in science, engage actively in learning activities, and show a willingness to explore new ideas and concepts (Herianto & Wilujeng, 2020). By acknowledging and nurturing individual differences in curiosity, educators can tailor instructional approaches to meet students' diverse learning needs and enhance their overall science learning outcomes (Schijndel et al., 2018).

The exploration of different forms of curiosity in science learning highlights the significant impact of curiosity on students' engagement, motivation, and academic achievement in science education. By fostering scientific curiosity, incorporating inquiry-based learning approaches, and recognizing the relationship between curiosity and learning outcomes, educators can establish dynamic and enriching learning environments that inspire students to delve beyond the basics, leading to enhanced understanding and retention of information in science.

The Objectives of the Current Study

The growing emphasis on the role of curiosity in science education reflects the recognition of its multifaceted impact on learning processes and outcomes. This systematic literature review aims to comprehensively explore the dynamics of curiosity in the context of science learning, addressing both theoretical constructs and practical applications. The objectives outlined below guide the exploration of curiosity's role in enhancing educational experiences, particularly in the science domain.

Objective 1: Curiosity's Impact on Learning Processes and Outcomes

The first objective of this review is to empirically assess the impact of curiosity on various learning processes and outcomes. Prior studies have highlighted curiosity's role in fostering engagement and motivating students towards scientific inquiry, which are essential for authentic science learning experiences (Jirout, 2020; Wu et al., 2018). This review will analyze how curiosity influences memory, motivation, and cognitive processes, drawing on insights from (Gottlieb et al., 2013; Oudeyer et al., 2016), who have explored the effects of curiosity-driven behaviors on learning and information retention. The goal is to understand the direct and indirect benefits of curiosity in educational settings, particularly in science education.

Objective 2: Pedagogical Strategies to Foster Curiosity

The second objective aims to explore and evaluate effective pedagogical strategies that enhance curiosity in educational settings. Recent studies have discussed the integration of innovative educational tools and methods to stimulate curiosity (Kasneci et al., 2023; Siew & Ahmad, 2023). This review will examine approaches like the Thinking Wheel Map and the use of pedagogical agents, as discussed by (Alaimi et al., 2020). Additionally, it will consider practical recommendations for fostering curiosity through classroom interactions and teaching methodologies from (Bakhtawer et al., 2021; Higgins et al., 2017). The aim is to provide actionable insights into how curiosity can be effectively nurtured to enhance student engagement and learning in science.

Objective 3: Curiosity's Role in Science Skill Development

The third objective of this review is to assess the role of curiosity in the development of specific science skills. Previous work by (Herianto & Wilujeng, 2020) has demonstrated a positive correlation between curiosity and generic science skills. This review will explore how curiosity contributes to the development of critical thinking, reasoning skills, and problem-solving abilities, as highlighted by (Chander, 2012). The goal is to establish a link between curiosity and its practical implications for skill enhancement in science education.

By systematically addressing these objectives, this review aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted role of curiosity in science learning. This will contribute to academic discourse and offer practical guidance for educators looking to integrate curiosity-driven learning strategies into their teaching practices, thereby enhancing the educational experience and outcomes for students in science disciplines. To provide a stronger evidence base, this review will incorporate more primary empirical studies. While secondary sources offer valuable insights, primary studies provide direct evidence of the impact of curiosity on learning outcomes. For instance, integrating findings from recent studies that directly measure the effects of curiosity on student performance and engagement will enhance the robustness of the review.

One of the significant challenges in studying curiosity is accurately measuring it due to its subjective nature. Curiosity is multifaceted, encompassing various dimensions such as epistemic, perceptual, and social curiosity (Elban & Aslan, 2022). Traditional assessment methods, like questionnaires, often fail to capture the dynamic and evolving nature of curiosity (Patankar et al., 2022). This review will discuss these measurement challenges and suggest ways to develop more reliable and valid tools. By acknowledging the limitations in current measurement techniques, this review will offer a more nuanced understanding of how curiosity can be assessed and its impact accurately evaluated. To enhance academic rigor, this review included a critical analysis of gaps in the existing literature. While previous studies have explored the relationship between curiosity and learning outcomes, there is a need to address how curiosity interacts with other psychological constructs, such as intrinsic motivation and sensation seeking (Maureira & Kniestedt, 2018). Additionally, this review will highlight the need for more culturally sensitive and contextually relevant research to understand how curiosity manifests across different populations and educational settings (Jirout et al., 2022).

Finally, this review offered practical recommendations for educators. By examining effective pedagogical strategies and innovative tools that foster curiosity, educators can create more engaging and meaningful learning experiences. Approaches such as inquiry-based learning and the integration of story-based science literacy strategies have been shown to enhance students' scientific curiosity and inquiry skills (Quro & Choiriyah, 2022; Saraçoğlu & Kahyaoğlu, 2018). These recommendations will provide educators with actionable strategies to nurture curiosity in their classrooms, ultimately improving student engagement and learning outcomes in science.

METHODS

The methodology used in this literature review aims to analyze the relationship between curiosity and science learning outcomes in a meticulous manner. This section gives an overview of the approach used, including the criteria for source selection, the process of data extraction, and the synthesis of findings, all of which are crucial for addressing the main research objective.

Literature Search Strategy

The search strategy for this review involves a comprehensive examination of multiple electronic databases to ensure a broad and exhaustive literature search. The primary database utilized is Scopus, recognized for its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature across various disciplines (Zgliczynska & Kosinska-Kaczynska, 2021). The Scopus database is highly valued by researchers for literature reviews due to its extensive coverage of scholarly information, with over 22,794 active titles and more than 78 million bibliographic records (De Oliveira et al., 2024). This broad coverage ensures access to a diverse range of academic publications, making it a valuable resource for comprehensive literature reviews across various disciplines (De Oliveira et al., 2024). Moreover, Scopus contains a wide range of high-quality peer-reviewed articles, particularly in fields such as business and management, making it a popular choice for researchers seeking quantitative analyses (Othman & Abu Hassan, 2022). Compared to other databases like Google Scholar, Scopus offers a more extensive collection of peer-reviewed literature, serving as a valuable resource for researchers conducting in-depth analyses and reviews (Othman & Abu Hassan, 2022). Additionally, Scopus is the largest abstract citation database, surpassing other scientific databases such as Web of Science, Embase, and IndMed in terms of the number of indexed sources (Chakraborty et al., 2022). This extensive coverage of scientific literature positions Scopus as a comprehensive resource for researchers seeking access to a wide range of scholarly publications for literature reviews and research endeavors (Chakraborty et al., 2022).The widespread use of the Scopus database in academic research is attributed to its comprehensive coverage, credibility, visibility, and extensive collection of high-quality peer-reviewed articles. Researchers value Scopus for its reliability, quality assurance processes, and broad exposure, making it an indispensable tool for conducting systematic literature reviews and advancing knowledge in various fields of study.

The key search terms used include: TITLE-ABS-KEY(("science learning" OR "science education") AND (curiosity OR "scientific curiosity")) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2025 AND (LIMIT-TO(SRCTYPE, "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO(PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "SOCI")) AND (LIMIT-TO(DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO(LANGUAGE, "English"))

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Table 1 outlines the inclusion and exclusion criteria that have been established to maintain the rigor and relevance of the review. These criteria aim to ensure clear guidelines for what is included and excluded.

Table 1. Inclusion And Exclusion Criteria

Criteria Type	Criteria Details
Inclusion Criteria	Explicitly investigate the relationship between curiosity and learning outcomes in science education. Empirical research studies published in peer-reviewed journals. Include quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research designs. Written in English.
Exclusion Criteria	Non-peer-reviewed articles, opinion pieces, and grey literature to maintain academic rigor. Studies that do not focus primarily on curiosity or its direct impact on science learning. Articles published more than 20 years ago to focus on contemporary insights and developments. Non-English studies due to language constraints in analysis.

The exclusion of articles published more than 20 years ago is justified to ensure that the review focuses on contemporary insights and developments relevant to current educational practices and research trends. However, recognizing the potential value of historical perspectives, the review will briefly consider significant older studies to provide foundational insights where relevant.

Data Extraction

To extract relevant data from the selected articles, a standardized form will be utilized. This form will include essential information such as the author(s), year of publication, study design, sample size, measures of curiosity, science learning outcomes, and key findings. This structured approach ensures consistency and facilitates the comparison of studies. The process of data synthesis will follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Widarti et al., 2023). This will involve a systematic approach to literature search and selection, ensuring the rigor and transparency of the review process (Sokat & Altay, 2021). The advanced search capabilities of Scopus and other databases will be leveraged to construct complex search queries tailored to the specific research questions and inclusion criteria (Campo et al., 2022). This will enable efficient retrieval of relevant articles, screening for eligibility, and data extraction for analysis in line with PRISMA guidelines. The citation tracking feature of Scopus will be utilized to identify key studies, track citation patterns, and assess the impact of individual publications within the scholarly community (Permatasari et al., 2022). This functionality is particularly valuable in systematic reviews, helping to synthesize existing evidence, identify gaps in the literature, and evaluate the quality and relevance of included studies (Ghani et al., 2020).

Synthesis of Findings

The synthesis of findings in this systematic literature review involves a thematic analysis, where studies are grouped based on similar or divergent outcomes concerning the role of curiosity in science learning. This review follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow, as depicted in Figure 1, to identify patterns and themes on how curiosity influences learning processes and outcomes. Additionally, it helps identify areas where findings are inconsistent or research is lacking, thereby highlighting gaps that require further exploration.

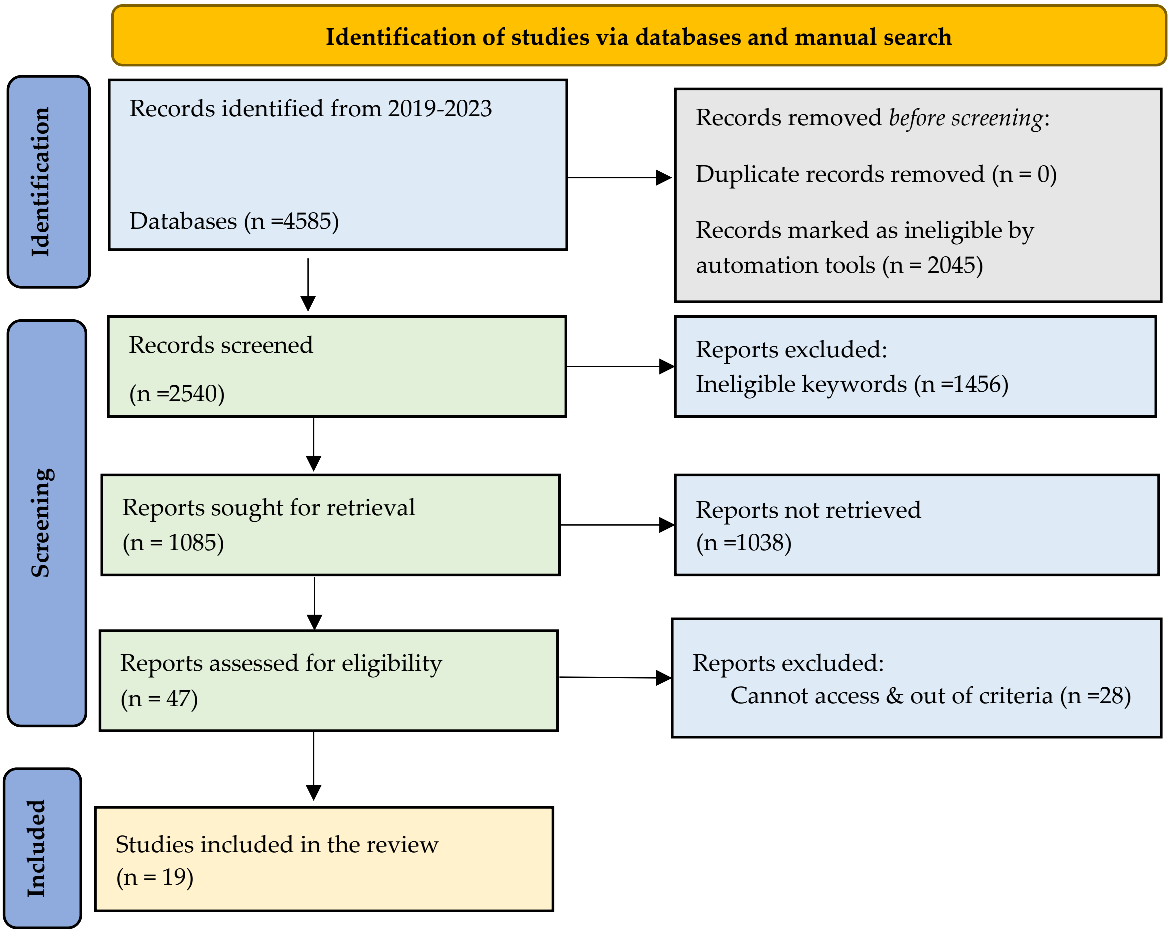

Figure 1. PRISMA flow Diagram

The PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1) provides a structured and transparent framework for documenting the literature search and selection process, ensuring methodological rigor, reproducibility, and clarity in reporting the review methodology (Amelia & Santoso, 2021). It visually represents the different stages of the review, including identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of studies, enabling readers to understand the selection criteria and process followed by the researchers (Alabadi & Aldawood, 2020)

Thematic Analysis Process

The thematic analysis process involves several key steps to ensure a comprehensive and systematic synthesis of findings. First, data extraction is performed using a standardized form to gather relevant information from the selected studies. This form includes details such as author(s), year of publication, study design, sample size, measures of curiosity, science learning outcomes, and key findings. This structured approach ensures consistency and facilitates the comparison of studies.

Next, the extracted data is initially coded to identify recurring concepts and patterns. Each study is reviewed in detail, and relevant sections are highlighted. Codes are assigned to specific segments of the text that relate to curiosity and science learning outcomes. The initial codes are then grouped into broader themes based on their similarities and differences. This step involves clustering related codes together to form initial themes that capture the essence of the data.

The initial themes are reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represent the data. This involves checking the coherence of each theme and comparing it with the original data to ensure it aligns with the findings from the studies. Each theme is clearly defined and named to reflect its content and significance. This step involves creating concise descriptions for each theme to ensure clarity and ease of understanding. Finally, the themes are synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of curiosity in science learning. This synthesis involves integrating the themes to highlight the overall patterns, relationships, and insights derived from the review.

Identified Themes

Several key themes emerged from the thematic analysis of the selected studies. Curiosity as a motivational driver significantly influences students' motivation to engage in science learning. Studies have shown that curiosity-driven learners are more likely to participate actively in scientific inquiries and experiments, leading to deeper engagement and better learning outcomes (Jirout, 2020; Wu et al., 2018).

Curiosity also enhances cognitive processes such as memory, attention, and information retention. Research indicates that curiosity-driven behaviors activate brain regions associated with learning and memory, resulting in improved cognitive performance and retention of scientific knowledge (Gottlieb et al., 2013; Oudeyer et al., 2016).

Effective pedagogical strategies can enhance curiosity in educational settings. Innovative tools and methods, such as the Thinking Wheel Map and the use of pedagogical agents, have been shown to stimulate curiosity and improve student engagement in science learning (Alaimi et al., 2020; Kasneci et al., 2023; Siew & Ahmad, 2023).

Curiosity contributes to the development of essential science skills, including critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving abilities. Studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between curiosity and the acquisition of generic science skills, highlighting its importance in science education (Chander, 2012; Herianto & Wilujeng, 2020).

However, measuring curiosity accurately poses significant challenges due to its subjective nature and the diverse ways it is defined and experienced. Traditional assessment methods may not fully capture the dynamic and evolving nature of curiosity, necessitating the development of more reliable and valid measurement tools (Elban & Aslan, 2022; Patankar et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Impact of Curiosity on Learning and Academic Outcomes

The systematic literature review on curiosity in science learning has provided valuable insights into the measures of curiosity and their limitations. This evaluation is essential for understanding how curiosity is conceptualized and quantified in educational research, especially in the context of science learning. By examining the various research methods, tools, sample groups, and impacts related to curiosity in science learning, we can gain a thorough understanding of the current support and validation for these studies. This insight not only reflects on past efforts but also lays the groundwork for future research directions in exploring curiosity within science learning. Understanding these elements is crucial for advancing research in this field, ensuring that studies effectively contribute to educational practices and understanding.

Table 1. Types of Research, Instrument, Sample, and Impact

Author	Methodology	Sample/Subject	Instruments	Main Results
(P.-H. Wu & Wu, 2020)	Structural equation modeling	605 11th graders from senior high schools in Taiwan	Online questionnaire and computer-based assessment of scientific inquiry abilities	Curiosity is significantly related to inquiry abilities through cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and social engagement. Emotional and cognitive engagement had significant effects on inquiry abilities.
(Adriyawati et al., 2020)	Qualitative method with reflective journals, classroom observations, interviews, and a scientific literacy test	30 grade 4 students from a public elementary school in West Java, Indonesia	Semi-structured interviews, reflective journals, and classroom observations	STEAM-Project-Based Learning improved problem-solving skills and curiosity but faced challenges in source and time management.
(Hochberg et al., 2020)	Quasi-experimental repeated-measurement design	23 students in the treatment group and 28 in the control group	6-point Likert-type scale for state curiosity	No significant difference in curiosity between groups; METs significantly increased learning achievement.
(Schiefer et al., 2019)	Randomized block design with a treated control group	65 elementary school children in Grades 3 and 4	26-item instrument by Conley et al. (2004) and 14-item instrument by Litman and Spielberger (2003)	The intervention improved epistemic beliefs and curiosity among participants, showing that structured extracurricular programs effectively promote scientific curiosity.
(Aral et al., 2022)	Mixed-method design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches	1,218 children in nine science programs at Ankara Children's University	Evaluation form with 13 items and semi-structured interviews	Science curricula were enjoyable and informative but needed to be more engaging for some children. The study suggests revisions to make the curricula more child-centered and inquiry-based.
(Münkel-Jiménez et al., 2020)	Hands-on learning activity	15 tenth-grade students from a Costa Rican high school	Experiments with common materials and student-built fluorimeter	Increased interest and understanding of photosynthesis; significant rise in scientific curiosity.

Author	Methodology	Sample/Subject	Instruments	Main Results
(Cybulskis et al., 2021)	Hands-on learning activity	15 tenth-grade students from a Costa Rican high school	Experiments with common materials and student-built fluorimeter	Increased interest and understanding of photosynthesis; significant rise in scientific curiosity.
(Kennedy et al., 2021)	Pretest-posttest design	62 adult participants visiting the La Brea Tar Pits Museum for the first time	Six-item multiple-choice instrument, six-item interest measures, and adapted Epistemically-Related Emotion Scales	AR experience reduced scientific misconceptions and enhanced curiosity and interest in science.
(Bjerknes et al., 2024)	Review of peer-reviewed articles	33 articles focusing on children aged 0–8 and their engagement with science through curiosity and/or wonder	Observational methods and interviews for curiosity identification	The review highlights the need for more focused research on how to observe and stimulate children's curiosity and wonder in natural science learning.
(Kahuroa et al., 2023)	Six-month research cycle	Three case study children from a New Zealand kindergarten	Teacher observations, audio and video recordings, and written reflections	Science experiences led to increased scientific curiosity, greater engagement, and development of domain-specific and domain-general knowledge among children.
(J. Kang, 2023b)	Classroom setting	410 primary school students from South Korea	Epistemic Curiosity Scale, self-concept measurement, and Science State Curiosity and Anxiety Scale	Science curiosity significantly predicted state curiosity in both groups. Science self-concept had a significant moderating effect in the violation outcome group.
(Landrum, 2021)	Surveys	1,003 participants from Survey 1 and 556 from Survey 2	Science Curiosity Scale (SCS) questionnaire	Mixed evidence regarding gender differences in YouTube usage for science content. Women primarily sought information, whereas men watched for both information and entertainment.

Author	Methodology	Sample/Subject	Instruments	Main Results
(Billingsley & Heyes, 2023)	Workshop	Students aged 16–18	Activities like media headline analysis and a 'discipline wheel'	The workshop aims to foster epistemic humility and multidisciplinary understanding, making students more resilient to sensationalized misinformation.
(Slim et al., 2022)	Mixed methods design	73 fifth and sixth graders from two suburban primary schools in the Netherlands	Science Curiosity in Learning Environments (SCILE) questionnaire	Curiosity and attitude toward science and technology, along with prior conceptual knowledge, were predictive of situational interest in students.
(Beattie et al., 2020)	Introduction of SCOPES (Sparking Curiosity through Open-source Platforms in Education and Science)	Not specified	Raspberry Pi technology, a camera, LED strip, and an SD card	SCOPES aims to bridge the gap between science labs and classrooms, allowing students to explore real-world experiments and data, encouraging multinational community experiences and cognitive engagement.
(Jirout et al., 2022)	Development of the Curiosity in Classrooms (CiC) Framework	35 video-recorded elementary-level math lessons	CiC Framework coding protocol	The study found low levels of curiosity-promoting practices in observed math lessons, emphasizing the need for further research to support students' curiosity.
(Nurdiana et al., 2023)	Quantitative-descriptive research with a survey method	150 prospective biology teacher students	Science Curiosity in Learning Environments (SCILE) questionnaire	Gender contributes directly to critical thinking skills through scientific curiosity, indicating that curiosity is a motivator for students to observe and think critically.

The systematic literature review on curiosity in science learning provides valuable insights into how curiosity influences learning and academic outcomes. Understanding the conceptualization and quantification of curiosity in educational research, especially in science learning, is essential for advancing the field. Table 1 summarizes various studies exploring this relationship, highlighting methodologies, sample groups, instruments used, and the overall impact of the findings. The following sections expand on these key insights, emphasizing their significance in educational research.

Key Insights from the Literature (Thematic Analysis)

The systematic literature review on curiosity in science learning underscores its significant impact on learning processes and academic outcomes across diverse educational settings. Integrating findings from multiple studies provides a comprehensive understanding of how fostering curiosity can enhance cognitive engagement, problem-solving skills, and the comprehension of scientific concepts.

Cognitive and Emotional Engagement in Inquiry Skills

P.-H. Wu & Wu, 2020 employed structural equation modeling to analyze data from 605 11th graders in Taiwan, revealing that students' curiosity is significantly related to their inquiry abilities, mediated by cognitive and emotional engagement. This finding aligns with (Adriyawati et al., 2020), who studied the impact of STEAM-Project-Based Learning (STEAM-PjBL) on elementary students in Indonesia. They discovered that this approach not only made science more relevant to students' lives but also improved their problem-solving skills and curiosity. Both studies highlight the importance of creating emotionally and cognitively engaging learning environments to enhance students' inquiry skills in science education. However, Adriyawati et al. noted challenges such as source and time management, indicating the need for careful planning and support in project-based learning.

Innovative Tools and Technological Integration

(Hochberg et al., 2020) compared traditional experimental tools with Mobile Devices as Experimental Tools (METs) in teaching physics. While traditional methods did not significantly affect curiosity, the use of METs significantly increased scientific curiosity and learning achievement. This suggests that integrating modern technology in education can enhance students' curiosity and academic performance. Similarly, (Kennedy et al., 2021) explored the use of augmented reality (AR) at the La Brea Tar Pits Museum, finding that AR experiences not only reduce scientific misconceptions but also significantly increase curiosity and interest in science. These studies highlight the potential benefits of innovative tools and immersive technologies in transforming educational experiences and promoting curiosity.

Structured Extracurricular Programs and Curriculum Evaluation

(Schiefer et al., 2019) conducted a randomized trial with elementary school children in Germany to evaluate the effects of a STEM enrichment program. They observed improved epistemic beliefs and curiosity among participants, demonstrating that structured extracurricular programs effectively promote scientific curiosity. In contrast, (Aral et al., 2022) evaluated science programs at Ankara Children's University, finding that while the programs were both enjoyable and educational, some elements lacked engagement for certain students. This feedback emphasizes the need to align scientific curricula more closely with students' interests and everyday experiences to enhance their engagement and curiosity.

Experiential Learning and Hands-On Activities

Research by (Cybulskis et al., 2021; Münkel-Jiménez et al., 2020) on hands-on learning activities designed to teach photosynthesis demonstrated that practical, engaging activities significantly increase students' interest and understanding of scientific concepts. These findings underscore the value of experiential learning in promoting curiosity and enhancing science education. Similarly, (Beattie et al., 2020) introduced SCOPES, a cost-effective STEM didactic tool using Raspberry Pi technology to engage students in real-world experiments.

This tool promotes multinational community experiences and cognitive engagement, further highlighting the benefits of hands-on learning.

Early Childhood Education and Intentional Pedagogical Approaches

(Bjerknes et al., 2024) conducted a review focusing on children aged 0–8 and their engagement with science through curiosity and wonder. They identified a lack of explicit definitions and measures for curiosity and wonder, emphasizing the need for more focused research on how to observe and stimulate children's curiosity in natural science learning settings. Kahuroa et al. (2023) carried out a six-month research cycle at a New Zealand kindergarten, finding that science experiences designed to provoke scientific curiosity led to increased curiosity, greater engagement, and the development of domain-specific and domain-general knowledge among children. These studies highlight the potential of early childhood settings to nurture scientific curiosity through intentional pedagogical approaches.

Self-Concept, Gender Differences, and Multidisciplinary Approaches

J. Kang (2023) examined the moderating role of science self-concept in eliciting state curiosity among primary school students in South Korea. The findings indicated that science curiosity significantly predicted state curiosity, with science self-concept having a moderating effect in specific contexts. This underscores the importance of self-concept in stimulating curiosity and learning in science education. (Landrum, 2021) investigated gender differences in YouTube usage for science content through surveys, revealing mixed evidence regarding gender differences. The study suggested that men are more likely to watch science and technology videos for both information and entertainment, while women primarily seek information. This highlights the need for targeted strategies to engage female viewers in science media.

Billingsley and Heyes (2023) introduced a workshop aimed at developing epistemic insight among students aged 16–18, fostering epistemic humility and multidisciplinary understanding. This approach makes students more resilient to sensationalized misinformation and better prepared for future roles in society. Slim et al. (2022) used a mixed-methods design to explore individual differences among elementary school students in science and technology education. They found that curiosity and attitude toward science and technology, along with prior conceptual knowledge, were predictive of situational interest, highlighting the role of curiosity in engaging students in these subjects.

Classroom Practices and Teacher Strategies

Jirout et al. (2022) developed the Curiosity in Classrooms (CiC) Framework to identify instructional practices that support curiosity. Their findings revealed low levels of curiosity-promoting practices in observed math lessons, emphasizing the need for further research to support students' curiosity in educational contexts. Nurdiana et al. (2023) explored the scientific curiosity and critical thinking skills of prospective biology teachers, finding that gender contributes directly to critical thinking skills through scientific curiosity. This highlights the importance of fostering curiosity to promote critical thinking and observation skills.

Outcomes Associated with Curiosity-Driven Learning

Extensive research in the fields of education and cognitive science has substantiated the profound outcomes associated with curiosity-driven learning. These studies collectively demonstrate how curiosity enhances cognitive processes, significantly impacts memory retention, and improves overall learning effectiveness.

Enhancing Memory and Learning Processes

The PACE (Prediction, Appraisal, Curiosity, and Exploration) framework developed by (Gruber et al., 2014) and further elaborated in 2019 underscores the role of curiosity in modulating hippocampus-dependent learning. Curiosity activates the dopaminergic circuit, which is crucial for memory encoding and consolidation. This neural activation suggests that curiosity not only triggers immediate engagement with the material but also enhances long-term retention of information. By fostering curiosity in educational settings, educators can facilitate deeper and more enduring learning experiences for students. This framework highlights the integral connection between curiosity and the brain's reward system, which plays a vital role in enhancing memory and learning processes.

Motivation and Exploratory Behavior

Curiosity significantly impacts motivation and exploratory behavior, driving individuals to engage with and explore their surroundings. Kidd and Hayden (2015) delved into the psychological and neurological aspects of curiosity, revealing that it is an active and engaging process motivated by the desire to fill knowledge gaps. This desire enhances cognitive processing and strengthens learning, as individuals are driven to seek out new information and experiences. The active exploration prompted by curiosity leads to more dynamic and engaging learning environments where students are continually motivated to learn and discover.

Guided Exploration and Attention Mechanisms

The computational and neural mechanisms underlying information-seeking behaviors and curiosity are crucial for sustaining attention and promoting deeper engagement with educational material. Gottlieb et al. (2013) explored these mechanisms, identifying an automatic preference for novelty and deliberate searches for learning progress as key components of curiosity-driven exploration. These mechanisms ensure that curiosity captures and sustains attention, allowing for more profound and meaningful engagement with the material. By incorporating elements of guided exploration and novelty into educational content, educators can enhance students' focus and interest, leading to improved learning outcomes.

Impact on Learning and Memory Retention

Curiosity, novelty, and surprise collectively improve learning outcomes and memory retention, as highlighted by Oudeyer et al. (2016). Their review emphasized the role of introducing novel and surprising elements in educational content to boost curiosity and enhance the learning process. This improvement is attributed to increased neural activity in pleasure and reward-related areas of the brain, stimulated by curiosity. When students encounter new and unexpected information, their curiosity is piqued, leading to greater engagement and better retention of the material. This highlights the importance of creating stimulating and diverse learning experiences that maintain students' interest and curiosity.

Comprehensive Benefits of Curiosity-Driven Learning

The collective findings from these studies demonstrate that curiosity-driven learning leads to various benefits, including improved memory encoding and consolidation, increased motivation and exploratory behavior, and enhanced attention and learning processes. Curiosity acts as a catalyst for cognitive engagement, encouraging students to delve deeper into the subject matter and retain information more effectively. This engagement is not merely superficial but involves a deeper cognitive investment in the learning material, resulting in more significant educational achievements.

By understanding and leveraging these outcomes, educators can design learning environments that actively engage students and significantly enhance their learning capacities and achievements. Strategies that incorporate elements of curiosity-driven learning, such as introducing novel and surprising content, fostering a sense of exploration, and linking learning material to the brain's reward systems, can create more effective and engaging educational experiences. These approaches not only improve immediate learning outcomes but also contribute to the development of lifelong learning habits and cognitive skills.

Fostering curiosity in educational settings is crucial for enhancing students' cognitive engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. The integration of curiosity-driven strategies into teaching practices can lead to more dynamic and effective learning environments, ultimately supporting students' academic growth and lifelong learning. By recognizing the multifaceted benefits of curiosity, educators can create a more stimulating and enriching educational experience for their students.

Pedagogical Strategies to Foster Curiosity

Effective pedagogical approaches are crucial in science education to create environments that engage students and deepen their understanding and retention of scientific concepts. Various studies have identified innovative strategies and interventions that significantly encourage curiosity-driven learning experiences.

Integrating Large Language Models

Integrating large language models in educational settings can stimulate curiosity by providing students with access to vast amounts of information and encouraging them to question and verify the data they encounter (Kasneci et al., 2023). This approach not only fosters curiosity but also equips students with critical thinking and fact-checking skills necessary to navigate and assess information in the digital age. By leveraging these models, educators can promote an inquisitive mindset, prompting students to delve deeper into subjects and explore various perspectives.

Thinking Wheel Map Approach

The Thinking Wheel Map approach is a pedagogical tool that encourages students to explore different aspects of a topic through guided questioning and mapping of thoughts (Siew & Ahmad, 2023). This method enhances student engagement and curiosity by visually organizing information and promoting exploratory learning. By encouraging students to map their understanding and question the material actively, the Thinking Wheel Map approach significantly improves information retention and deepens students' comprehension of complex scientific concepts. This strategy highlights the importance of structured inquiry and visualization in fostering curiosity and learning.

Enhancing Question-Asking Skills

Alaimi et al. (2020) developed a pedagogical agent designed to enhance question-asking skills in children, with a particular focus on promoting divergent-thinking questions. This approach directly fosters curiosity by encouraging students to think creatively and explore different possibilities within a given scientific context. By stimulating more in-depth and varied questions, this strategy helps students engage more deeply with the material, enhancing their learning and cognitive development. The development of question-asking skills is crucial for fostering a curious and investigative mindset in students.

Curiosity-Enhancing Strategies in Primary Education

Bakhtawer et al. (2021) investigated strategies used by teachers in public primary schools to enhance students' curiosity in science. These strategies, based on recommendations by Willingham (2014), include creating mystery and intrigue around scientific topics, using real-world problems to drive inquiry, and providing hands-on experiments that allow students to explore and discover scientific principles themselves. These approaches significantly boost curiosity and engagement among young learners by making science education more relevant and exciting. By incorporating these elements, educators can create a more stimulating and curiosity-driven learning environment.

Co-generative Dialoguing

Co-generative dialoguing involves collaborative discussions between teachers and students to reflect on learning experiences, identify areas of interest, and explore new questions that arise during lessons (Higgins et al., 2017). By valuing student input and fostering a collaborative learning environment, co-generative dialoguing enhances curiosity and helps develop deeper scientific literacy. This technique emphasizes the importance of student voice and active participation in the learning process, which are crucial for fostering a sense of curiosity and ownership in education.

Learning Environments and Curiosity

Structured learning experiences that actively involve students in scientific inquiry can greatly enhance their curiosity, leading to increased engagement and the development of inquiry skills (P. Wu et al., 2018). These environments encourage students to explore and question, which are crucial aspects of scientific learning. By designing learning experiences that prioritize student involvement and inquiry, educators can create a more engaging and curiosity-driven educational setting.

Communal Utility Value

Interventions aimed at enhancing students' perceptions of the communal utility of biomedical science can boost their motivation over time (Brown et al., 2015). This increase in motivation is more pronounced among students who strongly identify with biomedicine. When students view their learning activities as having communal benefits, their curiosity and motivation to engage deeply with the content are enhanced. This finding emphasizes the importance of contextualizing science education in a manner that aligns with students' values and community-oriented goals.

Curriculum Design and Pedagogical Approaches

Chander (2012) highlights the role of curiosity in developing critical thinking, reasoning skills, open-mindedness, and problem-solving attitudes. This underscores the need to incorporate curriculum elements and pedagogical strategies that foster an environment conducive to curiosity. By designing science education that encourages questioning and exploration, educators can cultivate these essential educational outcomes. Effective curriculum design should integrate elements that prompt curiosity and encourage students to engage deeply with scientific content.

Correlation with Academic Skills

Herianto and Wilujeng (2020) explored the direct link between curiosity and the development of science skills. Their research indicates that students with higher levels of curiosity demonstrate better science skills. This positive correlation implies that nurturing curiosity not only engages students but also contributes to their overall academic skill development in science. Educators should carefully consider this aspect when planning strategies to cultivate curiosity effectively. By fostering curiosity, educators can enhance students' academic abilities and interest in science.

These studies collectively demonstrate that various factors influence curiosity in science education, including educational environments, value perceptions, curriculum design, and the intrinsic connection between curiosity and academic skills. By understanding and addressing these factors, educators can create more engaging and effective science learning experiences. Harnessing the power of curiosity can promote deeper understanding, skill development, and lifelong learning among students.

The Role of Curiosity in Developing Science Skills

Curiosity plays a pivotal role in science education, acting as a fundamental psychological characteristic that enriches the learning process by promoting deeper engagement with scientific concepts. This intrinsic drive motivates learners to explore beyond surface-level understanding and grasp complex scientific ideas at their core. Curiosity enhances educational processes and outcomes in multiple ways, facilitating motivation, observation, inquiry, adaptability, and lifelong learning.

Firstly, curiosity stimulates motivation among learners by creating an intrinsic desire to explore and comprehend new phenomena. It goes beyond the mere acquisition of information, focusing instead on a deeper understanding that aligns with personal and academic growth. Kidd and Hayden (2015) explain that individuals driven by curiosity engage more deeply with learning materials, resulting in improved educational outcomes. This engagement is fueled by the pleasure of learning and a continuous quest for knowledge, which is essential in scientific domains where new discoveries and understandings frequently occur.

Moreover, curiosity significantly enhances observation and inquiry, which are critical components of scientific education. Individuals with heightened curiosity are more inclined to question conventional ideas and seek innovative insights. Gruber et al. (2014) discuss how curiosity facilitates hippocampus-dependent learning, enriching the educational experience through improved memory and exploration. This is further supported by M.J. Kang et al. (2008), who emphasize that epistemic curiosity drives scientific discovery by encouraging learners to expand their knowledge base. Curiosity also plays a vital role in active learning, encouraging students to engage actively in the learning process rather than passively receiving information. According to Gruber and Ranganath (2019), curiosity improves learning and memory by promoting cognitive engagement and retention. Active learning fueled by curiosity involves not only participation in experiments and practical activities but also the connection with theoretical concepts, fostering personal understanding and connection.

Curiosity contributes significantly to knowledge retention by establishing solid connections between newly acquired information and existing knowledge, resulting in deeper understanding and long-term retention. Kidd and Hayden (2015) emphasize the role of curiosity in memory retention, particularly important in educational settings where long-term knowledge retention is crucial.

In addition, curiosity enhances adaptability and problem-solving abilities, which are vital skills in the scientific field where problems often lack straightforward solutions. (Hardy et al., 2017) suggest that curiosity promotes creative problem-solving by improving cognitive flexibility. This ability to approach problems from different angles and consider multiple solutions is crucial in scientific research and applications. Research supports the idea that curiosity is linked to better problem-solving skills through its influence on cognitive performance and exploration.

Curiosity's impact on fostering lifelong learning cannot be overstated. It ensures that individuals continue to seek new knowledge and skills throughout their lives, an essential trait in the rapidly evolving field of science. (Sakaki et al., 2018) discuss how curiosity plays a vital role in adaptive aging by maintaining cognitive function and mental health. This ongoing engagement with learning promotes personal and professional growth and keeps individuals mentally active and connected to their surroundings.

To promote curiosity in science learning, educational strategies should include challenging questions, gamification techniques, and exploratory learning environments. These approaches, as discussed by Jirout (2020), not only enhance curiosity but also create an educational atmosphere that fosters inquiry and discovery. Educators are encouraged to incorporate strategies that allow for student-generated questions and active participation, nurturing a scientific mindset that values curiosity and innovation. By implementing strategies to foster curiosity in science education, educators can greatly enhance teaching and learning, resulting in a deeper understanding of science and greater innovation.

Moving forward, there is a need to develop and utilize instruments that measure and promote curiosity in science education. Existing tools can be improved, and new ones created to better align with the dynamic nature of modern educational systems. Questionnaires, such as those used by P.-H. Wu and Wu (2020), can assess students' curiosity regarding research questions and experiment design feasibility. These questionnaires can use Likert scales to quantitatively measure curiosity. To enhance this, adaptive scaling can be implemented, where the complexity of the questionnaire adjusts based on the learner's responses, providing a more personalized educational experience.

Classroom observations, as utilized by Adriyawati et al. (2020), can be expanded by incorporating systematic behavioral coding schemes that identify specific indicators of curiosity, such as question-asking and explorative behavior during laboratory activities. Video analysis technology can automate some of these observations, allowing for real-time feedback and comprehensive data collection.

Instruments that measure epistemic beliefs and curiosity, as employed by Schiefer et al. (2020), are important for understanding how students perceive knowledge and learning. These assessments can be further developed by including scenarios or simulations that challenge students' views, prompting them to reflect and possibly revise their beliefs about science. Using METs for experiments, as shown in the study by Hochberg et al. (2020), can stimulate curiosity and engagement. Further development can integrate interactive elements like augmented reality (AR) overlays, which provide guided inquiries into scientific phenomena.

By leveraging these outcomes and strategies, educators can design learning environments that actively engage students and significantly enhance their learning capacities and achievements. Curiosity not only motivates learners but also improves their observational and inquiry skills, facilitates active learning, enhances problem-solving abilities, and promotes lifelong learning.

Future Research Directions

The exploration of curiosity in science education has revealed its significant impact on learning processes, cognitive engagement, and the development of essential scientific skills. However, to further advance this field, several areas require more in-depth investigation and innovation.

1. **Development of Comprehensive Curiosity Measurement Tools:** While existing tools like the Curiosity and Exploration Inventory scale have been useful, there is a need for more

comprehensive and nuanced instruments that can capture the dynamic and multifaceted nature of curiosity. Future research should focus on developing adaptive scaling questionnaires and integrating real-time data collection methods, such as video analysis and systematic behavioral coding, to provide a more detailed understanding of how curiosity manifests and influences learning in real-world educational settings.

2. **Longitudinal Studies on Curiosity and Learning Outcomes:** To better understand the long-term effects of curiosity-driven learning, longitudinal studies are essential. These studies should track students over extended periods to assess how sustained curiosity influences academic achievement, skill development, and career choices in scientific fields. Longitudinal research can provide insights into how early curiosity interventions impact lifelong learning and adaptability.
3. **Curiosity-Enhancing Pedagogical Strategies:** Further research is needed to explore and refine pedagogical strategies that effectively foster curiosity in diverse educational contexts. This includes investigating the impact of different teaching methods, such as inquiry-based learning, gamification, and the use of immersive technologies like augmented reality, on student curiosity and engagement. Comparative studies can help identify the most effective approaches for various age groups and educational settings.
4. **Curiosity and Technology Integration:** The role of modern technologies, including large language models and augmented reality, in enhancing curiosity-driven learning requires more exploration. Research should examine how these technologies can be integrated into science education to stimulate curiosity and improve learning outcomes. This includes assessing the effectiveness of digital tools in providing interactive and personalized learning experiences that engage students deeply.
5. **Impact of Curiosity on Specific Science Skills:** While the general benefits of curiosity on learning are well-documented, more research is needed to understand its impact on specific scientific skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Studies should investigate how curiosity-driven approaches can be tailored to develop these skills more effectively and how they contribute to students' overall academic and professional success.
6. **Addressing Individual Differences in Curiosity:** Curiosity is influenced by various individual factors, including personality traits, prior knowledge, and cultural background. Future research should explore how these factors interact with curiosity and how educational strategies can be personalized to cater to individual differences. This includes developing targeted interventions that address the unique needs and preferences of diverse student populations.
7. **Curiosity and Collaborative Learning:** The role of curiosity in collaborative learning environments is another area that warrants further investigation. Research should examine how curiosity influences group dynamics, peer interactions, and collective problem-solving in science education. Understanding these dynamics can help educators design more effective collaborative learning experiences that harness the power of curiosity to enhance group learning outcomes.
8. **Curiosity and Emotional Engagement:** The interplay between curiosity and emotional engagement is a critical area for future research. Studies should investigate how emotional factors, such as enjoyment, anxiety, and motivation, influence the development and expression of curiosity in science learning. This includes exploring how educators can create emotionally supportive environments that foster curiosity and reduce barriers to engagement.

By addressing these research directions, scholars and educators can deepen their understanding of curiosity's role in science education and develop more effective strategies to nurture and sustain it. This will ultimately contribute to more engaging, innovative, and effective science learning experiences, preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

CONCLUSION

The systematic examination of curiosity in science learning underscores its pivotal role as a motivator and cognitive enhancer in education. Curiosity, while an innate trait, can be effectively nurtured through deliberate teaching methods and engaging learning environments. This review highlights the necessity for educational systems to adopt curiosity-driven strategies to enhance academic achievements and foster lifelong learning. Recognizing and harnessing curiosity can significantly enrich the educational experience, equipping students with inquisitive minds capable of tackling future challenges. Additionally, the review contributes to academic knowledge by summarizing current understandings and approaches, providing a solid foundation for further research and practical application in educational settings. The transformative potential of curiosity in education is particularly emphasized in the sciences, where engaging with complex content is essential for both academic success and practical application.

RECOMMENDATION

To enhance the role of curiosity in science education, several recommendations are proposed based on this review's insights. Future research should focus on developing comprehensive, adaptive instruments to measure curiosity, capturing its dynamic and multifaceted nature in real-world settings. Longitudinal studies are necessary to assess the long-term effects of curiosity-driven learning, providing valuable insights into how sustained curiosity impacts academic achievement, skill development, and career choices. Pedagogical strategies that effectively foster curiosity should be further investigated and refined, comparing methods such as inquiry-based learning, gamification, and immersive technologies to identify the most effective approaches.

Integrating modern technologies, including large language models and augmented reality, can enhance curiosity-driven learning by providing interactive and personalized experiences. Curiosity-driven approaches should be tailored to develop specific scientific skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, contributing to overall academic and professional success. It is essential to explore how individual factors such as personality traits, prior knowledge, and cultural background influence curiosity, and develop targeted interventions catering to diverse student populations.

Furthermore, examining the impact of curiosity on group dynamics, peer interactions, and collective problem-solving in collaborative learning environments can help design experiences that leverage curiosity to enhance group learning outcomes. The interplay between curiosity and emotional engagement should also be investigated to create emotionally supportive environments that foster curiosity and reduce engagement barriers. By focusing on these recommendations, educators and researchers can better understand curiosity's role in science education and develop effective strategies to nurture and sustain it, creating more engaging, innovative, and effective science learning experiences that prepare students for future challenges and opportunities.

Author Contributions
The authors have sufficiently contributed to the study, and have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding
This research received no external funding.

Acknowledgement
This research represents a collective endeavor, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to its success.

Declaration of Interest
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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