

Building the Psychological Well-Being of Elementary School Students through Social Emotional Learning Strategies

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Abstract

Technological advances bring about changes in various aspects of human life. Humans must be able to adapt and collaborate in the face of rapid technological advances in order to make optimal use of them. Education is required to develop holistic learning, focusing not only on things that are purely intellectual, but also on the emotional, physical, social and spiritual aspects. Many students experience behavioral problems, such as inability to show empathy, build relationships, make responsible decisions, and even be anti-social. Then emotional social learning is present to give knowledge and skills to students in implementing social and emotional aspects as a livelihood supply. The research aims to provide a better understanding of how the application of emotional social learning strategies can help improve the psychological well-being of students. The researchers will use qualitative methods and descriptive approaches to describe and analyze emotional social learning strategies for student psychological well-being. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. The study was conducted on students of 6th grade of SDN Tenjolaya 1. The results of the study showed that the educational curriculum of the SDN Tenjolaya 1 level already integrated emotional social education. Teachers already have a proof of preparedness in implementing emotional social learning with the use of an optimal learning environment and planning the implementation of learning that incorporates social emotional skills. The active involvement of students in the learning process can develop emotional social skills optimally. The psychological well-being of the student can be reflected in the happiness and meaningfulness of the learning carried out by the student. Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that, building the psychological well-being of elementary school students can be done with the strategy of emotional social learning.

Keywords

Holistic; psychological well-being; skills; social emotions



I. Introduction

The world is facing various significant changes in the order of life. The development of science and technology has a major impact on all aspects of human life, one of which is education. Education plays an important role in preparing the nation's next generation who are required to have various skills that are in line with society's needs in facing the era of industrial revolution 4.0 and the era of societal revolution 5.0. In this era, it is feared that the taking over of various human skills and replacing them with the application of technology could cause various degradations in human life. It is important that education is able to synergize humans with the various technological advances they face without abandoning their dignity as social creatures.

The relevance of educational provision to the needs of the times certainly greatly influences the success of education itself. If all this time the benchmark for educational success has only been based on the results of intellectual assessments alone, then this is no longer in line with current educational demands. The importance of developing students' abilities holistically, which does not only pay attention to intellectual aspects, but also physical, emotional, social and character aspects. Skills in building relationships and interacting in social life are a real provision for students' future lives. There are four reflections of future learning that are closely related to 21st century skills that students must have, namely, critical thinking and problem solving, communication skills, collaboration skills, and creativity.(Nurjanah, 2019).

Nowadays, many Indonesian students experience behavioral problems. This can be seen in increasing cases of anxiety, depression, bullying, and even ending lives. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission states that the phenomenon of physical and psychological violence and intimidation can occur due to the inability to solve problems well, so that it views violence as a way of solving it (KPAI, 2020). In the period January - November 2023, as many as 37 children decided to end their lives (KPAI, 2023). There are quite a few of the current generation who have a weak heart, where if they encounter a problem that is quite complicated they find it difficult to solve it, so many people call it the apple generation, which looks sweet and attractive on the outside but is fragile on the inside. This phenomenon describes the character of our students today.

Based on the results of observations carried out at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School, it shows several problems in student behavior, such as high individualism, lack of empathy, lack of ability to build relationships with other people, as well as students' lack of ability to make decisions. Most of them feel they can do everything without the help of others. However, in accordance with its nature, humans are social creatures, so it is necessary for them to open themselves to the social environment around them.

In line with the explanation above, it is important to restructure education which is able to help students overcome various challenges in their daily lives which are not only beneficial academically, but also professionally and socially. One effort that can be done is to carry out social emotional learning. (Casel, 2020) states that social and emotional learning is an integral part of education and human development. This statement emphasizes that social and emotional learning is not only part of the education system, but is also an important part of overall human development. In education, it is important to help students develop the social and emotional skills needed in the lives they live. In human development, social emotional learning plays an important role in forming a balanced individual. Social-emotional learning refers to a child's ability to be sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others when interacting in everyday life. This includes the ability to understand, recognize, and respond to other people's feelings with empathy and control emotions in a healthy way (Kholidah, 2022).

Social emotional learning is expected to be able to create children's cognitive and social adaptability (Huda. Nurul, 2023). Social emotional learning is also seen as effective in increasing students' learning motivation, this is proven by increasing students' self-confidence and enthusiasm in participating in lessons.(Avandra et al., 2023). The application of social emotional learning is also considered capable of making the learning process more enjoyable, developing critical attitudes, developing student creativity, improving good communication(Review et al., 2023).(Weeks, 1931 in Yoder & Dusenbury, 2017)states that social and emotional learning is developed to help students achieve success in learning, career and life. In line with this, social emotional learning

aims to provide skills, knowledge and understanding that not only support academic achievement, but also help in facing challenges in careers and everyday life.

The implementation of special emotional learning in schools is expected to be able to foster students' psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is very important for children so that they can function well and adapt to their environment (Manindjo et al., 2023). In line with this, in order to interact well in the environment, it is important to have good psychological well-being. People who have good psychological well-being tend to be better able to adapt to change, learn, and interact well with others.

Teachers as the spearhead in the education process are required to be able to facilitate learning in order to achieve learning goals. Teachers must ensure that the design of the learning process carried out can influence student behavior, both their reactions to the teaching material and the ongoing learning atmosphere. The quality of the learning process is measured through the quality of learning activities carried out by the teacher and the quality of students' learning activities in class. Therefore, it is important that the teacher's teaching readiness is in the ongoing learning process. Teaching readiness also includes the physical and mental condition of students as well as the teacher's preparation for managing the classroom, including the condition of the classroom and facilities (Wote and Sabarua, 2020). Teachers must be able to provide a variety of learning strategies that are able to develop social emotional skills. Social emotional learning can be integrated into the learning process or carried out routinely as a positive habit by establishing situations or conditions that suit needs. In its implementation, teachers are required to always innovate in designing learning that supports students and integrates social emotional learning in it. Thus, by implementing social emotional learning, it is hoped that it will be able to prepare students who have adequate skills to enter life. (Taylor et al., 2017) states that, developing social emotional skills in children is very important because school-based interventions have produced positive results in various indicators of mental health, relationships with peers and family, school attendance. Therefore, the learning carried out not only develops academic aspects but also social-emotional aspects as in this article which is expected to help students achieve psychological well-being. (Mimi Deviana, Tri Umari, 2023) states that psychological well-being is achieved by achieving a state of balance influenced by challenging and rewarding life events.

In line with the explanation above, researchers believe that building students' psychological well-being can be built through social emotional learning strategies. In this study, researchers focused on the readiness and learning process carried out by teachers in the classroom in an effort to build students' social emotional skills.

II. Research Methods

This research uses descriptive qualitative research. This research starts from data, utilizes existing theory as explanatory material and ends with a theory (Nasution, 2023). In this study, the researcher attempted to describe and interpret the findings experienced while carrying out the research. Researchers collect data directly from participants who are relevant to the research focus.

This research was carried out in October 2023 at SDN Tenjolaya 1, Cicalengka District, Bandung Regency. The subjects of this research were all 6 A class students, totaling 23 students, consisting of 15 male students and 8 female students. Meanwhile, the research object focuses on social emotional learning in an effort to build students' psychological well-being.

Data collection was carried out using interview, observation and documentation techniques (Toenlio, 2013). Where interviews are conducted directly with students to collect information regarding satisfaction in the learning process and social emotional skills. Observation is used when the researcher plays the role of observing the learning process being carried out. Documentation is carried out to determine the number of students, class conditions, school environment conditions that can support the research process.

Next, all the data obtained is summarized to focus on the main points of research. The data presentation is in the form of a narrative description that describes the research process carried out so that it can produce a conclusion that can be accounted for.

III. Result and Discussion

Based on the results of research at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School, the following explanation can be provided.

3.1 School Curriculum

Curriculum based on Law no. 20 of 2003 article 1 paragraph 19 is a set of plans regarding content, objectives, teaching materials and methods that serve as guidelines for implementing the teaching and learning process so that educational goals are achieved. In line with this statement, the curriculum is the basis for the direction of education. Preparing a curriculum at the educational unit level opens up opportunities for schools to develop a curriculum that is appropriate to the conditions of the educational unit, regional potential and characteristics, as well as the socio-culture of the local community and students in the educational unit.

Based on the results of a document study, the education unit level curriculum at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School has integrated the education unit level curriculum with social emotional learning. There are three strategies for implementing social emotional learning in the education unit level curriculum that have been implemented at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School, namely through curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs. In the curricular program, it can be seen from the integration of subjects taught in classes that focus on developing social emotional skills. The co-curricular program is structured as a school culture and school program that is carried out regularly which is able to develop students' social emotional skills. School programs that develop social emotional skills at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School include the bupos pajaya program which is an acronym for positive culture at SDN Tenjolaya, clean Friday program, congregational dhuha prayer program, and traditional games. The preparation of these programs allows for interaction between all members of the school community which can create harmonious relationships within the organization. The extracurricular program at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School is a scout extracurricular activity which runs regularly every Wednesday. Scout extracurricular selection can be used as a means of fostering and developing students' social and emotional skills such as self-confidence, cooperation, leadership and interpersonal skills, decision making and communication.

Apart from the programs described above, the school operational unit curriculum also explains that there is collaboration between the school, students' parents and the surrounding environment in developing the curriculum, one of which is in terms of developing social emotional skills. Parental involvement can help provide support, guidance, and create an environment that supports the development of social emotional skills outside the school environment.

3.2 Teachers' Teaching Readiness

In line with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophy that each child is unique and carries their own potential within themselves. Teachers only play a role in facilitating students in optimizing all the potential they have. Teachers have a fundamental role in the physical and psychological development of students, because teachers are adults outside the family who are always in contact with and witness the development of students. In the learning process, teachers sometimes not only focus on delivering learning material, but must also be able to pay attention to social and emotional aspects. Therefore, it is important for a teacher to be prepared to face the learning process. Teacher teaching readiness refers to the preparations carried out by a teacher before carrying out the teaching and learning process (Larlen, 2013). In this case, the researcher refers to information in the form of teacher readiness in preparing the learning process to be implemented, including classroom arrangement, preparation of learning implementation plans that contain social emotional learning content, as well as the teacher's ability to manage learning situations that can foster a harmonious culture in the classroom.

In terms of classroom arrangement, teachers are able to decorate classrooms that present an attractive and conducive learning environment. There are decorations in the classroom that have been made by students that display the students' work. Among the various decorations there is an decoration made by the teacher which is entitled "what do you feel". The teacher made the decoration using a cloth made from a banner which was printed in a size of 65 cm x 100 cm which contained an emoji that could describe feelings, and next to it there was a student's name stick which the students could stick on the emoji that represented their feelings. The classroom arrangement, such as the arrangement of chairs, appears flexible, allowing for interaction and collaboration between students.

Social learning is carried out by teachers in two ways, namely by creating a conducive classroom climate and integrating it into the learning process. In the learning planning that is prepared, the teacher tries to create a classroom climate that can arouse students' enthusiasm for learning, such as using a student-centered learning model that focuses on how students learn, not on what the teacher teaches. The teacher chooses a problem-based learning model. In the problem-based learning model, students are grouped into small groups to work together to solve problems. Thus, the development of students' social emotional skills, especially in social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making can develop optimally.

In line with the explanation above, teachers already have good teaching readiness in social emotional learning. Teacher teaching readiness is a condition where a teacher has basic competencies which include physical, mental readiness, knowledge, skills, and the ability to teach with innovative and efficient methods. (Ramadhan & Meilana, 2022). In its implementation, teachers already have teaching readiness which includes mastery of fields, interests, talents, determination, enthusiasm and experience which influence their ability to teach. Teachers who are ready to teach can provide the information that students need well, as well as create an effective learning atmosphere, help students understand the learning material, and can develop all their potential more optimally.

3.3 Students' Social Emotional Competencies

The social emotional aspect of children consists of four key development competencies, namely: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. (Syamsul Hadi, 2013).

The implementation of integrated social emotional learning for students in learning can be seen in student behavior both before, during and after the learning process takes place. Before the learning process takes place, students are able to demonstrate awareness of themselves. When students first come into the classroom, they go to the "what do you feel?" to attach his name to the emoji provided to show how he feels when he comes to school. At the beginning of the lesson, students become aware of the news, circumstances and feelings they are experiencing by responding to the teacher's question about what the students are feeling which appears on the board display "what do you feel?". By giving students the opportunity to express what they feel, warmth is established between the teacher and students. Students' self-management skills can also be reflected well in the learning process, when the teacher invites students to use stop techniques to restore students' full awareness (mindfulness). Students are invited to stop all activities that are being carried out, then take two to three deep, long breaths, feel what is happening to the body in a calm state, and continue learning activities with a calmer feeling, clearer mind, and a more positive attitude. This technique seems effective in preparing students to focus on the learning process and reducing distractions that can disrupt concentration, so that good emotional management can help students to observe situations better and make responsible decisions. Students' social skills are visible during collaborative learning activities in small groups. Students show empathy for each other in accepting members of their group. They try to help each other to solve problems raised in learning. Creating positive communication between members of the student group by giving full attention to each opinion expressed accompanied by appreciation for what is conveyed. Skills in relationships are created in harmony when students show their existence by expressing opinions and arguing in a positive context to solve the problems given. Students have social awareness when they are less active in the group discussion process so they try to take part in resolving the group discussion. Students learn to appreciate differences, build positive relationships with others, and resolve conflicts within groups in healthy and constructive ways. Students demonstrate responsible decision-making skills in the discussion process, by ensuring decisions are fair because not all group members' ideas will be accepted or used. All group members take part in making decisions based on the group's own interests. At the end of the learning process students are invited to reflect on the learning process carried out, this is also in line with self-awareness skills, where students understand more deeply about what they have learned and how to apply it in everyday life

Based on the description above, students' social and emotional skills can be maximized in the learning process. Social emotional learning has an important role in students' holistic development. Social and emotional learning is the process by which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, build and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL 2013). Based on this explanation, social emotional learning is an educational method that aims to help people, both children and adults, to be able to understand and manage their emotions, become better at communicating and interacting with other people, and make responsible decisions. Integration of Social and Emotional Learning can impact academic achievement (Daunic et al., 2021). In line with this, the social and emotional learning approach can hone social and emotional skills, interpersonal skills, empathy, and good decision-making abilities can help students become more mentally and emotionally prepared to learn. Additionally, strong social skills can help students interact better with teachers and fellow students. Conditions where students feel accepted, safe, and emotionally supported tend to make them more motivated and focused

on learning.(Weeks, 1931 in Yoder & Dusenbury, 2017)states that social and emotional learning is developed to help students achieve success in learning, career and life. In line with this, social emotional learning aims to provide skills, knowledge and understanding that not only support academic achievement, but also help in facing challenges in careers and everyday life.

3.4 Students' Psychological Well-Being

The learning that takes place depicts an atmosphere that makes students feel accepted, happy, and free to develop their abilities optimally. Students are able to manage emotions, resolve conflict, build healthy relationships, and improve their mental and emotional well-being. Students are capable to regulate and evaluate behavior with personal standards, so as to create an environment that suits their desires and needs. The emergence of the above attitudes is an indicator that shows the psychological well-being experienced by students during ongoing learning.

Psychological well-being is defined as a state in which a person has the ability to accept himself as he is, has the ability to build friendly relationships with other people, and has the ability to live alone. against social pressure, able to control the external environment, have meaning in life and able to achieve all their potential(Prabowo, 2016). People who have good psychological well-being tend to be better able to adapt to change, learn, and interact well with others.(Ryff, in Ramadhani et al., 2016)states that there are six dimensions of psychological well-being, namely: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, mastery of the environment, purpose in life, and personal growth. The dimension of self-acceptance is demonstrated by students involving awareness and recognition of oneself, both strengths and weaknesses, as well as appreciating and accepting oneself fully. The dimensions of positive relationships with other people are demonstrated by students when they are able to establish warm and trusting interpersonal relationships, have the ability to listen attentively, communicate effectively, resolve conflicts in a healthy way, and have a sense of empathy towards others. The autonomy dimension shows that students are able to act independently and regulate their own behavior. The dimension of environmental mastery can be seen when students are able to organize the environment according to their wishes in order to create a safer, more comfortable and empowering atmosphere which is reflected during group discussion activities. Students are able to choose situations and environments that are conducive, so they can avoid situations that can cause stress or discomfort. The dimension of life goals is reflected when students have a confident attitude, are passionate about facing problems, overcoming problems, and making responsible decisions. The personal growth dimension is reflected in students' critical thinking skills, overcoming difficulty focusing, and building a positive attitude to participate in learning activities.

Academic success is not the only factor that influences students' psychological well-being, but good emotional well-being, the ability to interact with other people well, and good psychological balance are also important factors in students' psychological well-being.(Atikasari, 2021). By understanding the importance of psychological well-being for students, the learning process at school can be more holistic and focused on overall student development. This holistic learning can help students have psychological freedom, the ability to make good decisions, the ability to learn using methods that suit themselves, and social and emotional development.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the research results described above, several conclusions can be drawn as follows. First, the education unit level curriculum at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School has integrated the formal curriculum with social emotional learning. Second, teachers at Tenjolaya 1 State Elementary School already have good teaching readiness. The teacher's use of the learning environment can help ensure optimal learning has been implemented well. Mastery of teaching materials and understanding of social emotional learning is very good, demonstrated by the preparation of learning implementation plans that include social emotional skills. Choosing student-centered learning models and methods has been proven to increase student involvement to take a full role in the learning process. Maximum classroom management creates an effective learning environment, so that the learning process can run well and students can achieve optimal learning outcomes. The teacher's warm attitude and demeanor creates a good relationship between the teacher and students. Teachers are able to be role models for students in implementing social emotional competencies by trying to understand and fulfill students' emotional needs, so that students feel accepted, valued and appreciated by the teacher. Third, students' social emotional skills during the learning process can develop optimally. Social emotional competencies which include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making can be raised at every stage of learning. The various social emotional skills that are developed have a positive impact on students' development, not only for now but also for their future preparations. The implementation of social emotional learning can not only develop social emotional competence but can also improve students' academic abilities, where students feel satisfied and appreciated for every achievement they make. Fourth, students' psychological well-being can be built by implementing social emotional learning. Fulfillment of the six indicators of psychological well-being which include: Self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, mastery of the environment, life goals, and personal growth during the learning process are proof that social emotional learning can build students' psychological well-being. The learning carried out is more meaningful because it is able to develop all students' potential in harmony, including intellectual, emotional, physical, social and spiritual potential.

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