

Social Emotional Learning in Increasing the Social Emotional and Academic Development of Children in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract—Many research results show that the emotional social development aspect has no less important role in determining the future of the child in the field of academic as well as the formation of mental and personality that is valid until the end of life. Many affecting social emotional development in children aged early i.e. family circumstances, state of the society, as well as schools. One way to develop the emotional social aspect of children optimally is Social Emotional Learning which is a process of acquiring comprehensive and integrated emotional social skills by involving all units within the child's environment such as family, community, teachers, school staff, and peers. Social Emotional Learning focuses on five aspects namely, self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, responsible in making decisions, and ability in relationships. With social emotional learning the child can be helped to gain knowledge and understanding about the feelings of himself and others, make good decisions, and can maintain relationships with others.

Keyword—social emotional development, social emotional learning, early childhood.

I. INTRODUCTION

Every new born child will grow and expand in different domains. Common child development domains include cognitive domains, language, physical and motoric, and emotional social. Bartolatta & Shulman, in [1], these domains will thrive and affect each other domains. The child will develop well if the domain of the domain develops in a balanced manner without being dominated by one domain only. According to the National Scientific Council of Developing Child, parents, communities, and policymakers are generally more oriented towards the cognitive, linguistic, and literacy aspects that must be developed to build the child's brain framework. Cognitive domain that has long been the concern and considered the most important, because of the many assumptions that a great child is a child who has cognitive intelligence. So much of the conventional educational practice that still buys the cognitive domain only, by cramming various kinds of lessons to be memorized and understood by children. In fact, Munandar in [2] explains that every child has different abilities that require different education. The task of education is to guide and nurture every child's abilities so that the child can manifest itself and function fully according to personal and community needs.

But along with the development of the times many new findings from researchers around the world on the

development and learning of children can be accessed easily by everyone. So gradually the old paradigm of child development and learning begins to shift toward a more advanced direction. The cognitive domain is no longer the only milestone and the benchmark for successful child development. Another developmental domain that is no less important and indispensable in today's modern life is the emotional social development.

The health of emotional social development is the foundation for the development of the brain and its success in life [3]. But the child's emotional social skills do not appear at birth, but require the help of adults such as parents, caregivers, and teachers to stimulate children's emotional social development to thrive. [4]. Zakharova and Silakova in [5] revealed that Early Childhood Education institutions in this case have important roles and duties in developing social and emotional children. The main characteristics of the system of relations with a child in the garden of childhood is of mutual understanding and interaction with each other, taking into account the characteristics and interests of the other children. One way to foster children's social and emotional development in early childhood is Social Emotional Learning (SEL). The SEL is an integrated program involving all components that affect the social development of children's emotions including family, community, and school. SEL programs designed to increase social competence emotional start for ages preschool to high school age and proven to increase the ability of children in various pawns, emotional and social well academically. Therefore, this paper discusses about social emotional learning to improve emotional social capability of children in early childhood.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows: Section II describes the emotional social development of children. Section III describes the factors affecting child's emotional social development. Section IV describes the results of research on emotional social development on academic ability. Section V describes the social emotional learning (SEL) in early childhood education. Section VI describes the implementation of Social emotional learning (SEL) in early childhood education. Finally, Section VII concludes this work.

II. EMOTIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

Children are characterized by having an interest in something and are likely to see and pay attention to it, then imitate what others are doing based on what they see and hear,

see trusted adults and peers for feedback on their emotional behaviour. Children imagine what other people think and feel and that thinking will affect how the child thinks and feels [6]. These things show that the child experiences emotional social development. According to Waltz emotional social development is a combination of social development and emotional development. These two things collaborate because of the tendency that emotional development occurs in social constructs. Moreover, the research results have given a strong emphasis that the emotional development of children and adolescents is a manifestation of their social competence [7]. In a separate sense in general the emotions according to Martani in [8], are the physiologically and psychologically-owned feelings of children used to respond to events occurring around them. Emotions play a role in giving strength to the body and organizing their thoughts to adjust to needs. While social development therein is a competence that is a capacity to align itself in responding flexibly to varying demands of interpersonal relationships, and the ability to regulate social behaviour in different social contexts [9].

Lippman and Cruchill in [10] describe the emotional social development of early childhood as the ability that appears in children with age range 0-5 years to form a relationship of proximity and security with adults and peers. The formation can be through children's experience, self-regulation, how children express their emotions in the social and cultural ethics accepted in their environment, and by exploring or studying all the contexts related to family, community, and culture.

Emotional social development involves the acquisition of some skills. According to Waltz the skills include confidence to participate directly in playing with his friends, showing interest and curiosity about the world around him, having the initiative to do an activity, having self-control like a child able to sit quietly and listen to stories, easy to *get along* and care with friends, ability to communicate including communication in resolving conflicts, and cooperative so that can cooperate in group activities.

Epstein in [11] also describes competencies in emotional social development as the ability to understand, organize and express emotional social aspects by being able to organize tasks in life such as learning, building relationships, problem solving, as well as adapting to the demands of growth and development complex.

While the emotional social skills that are collided by The Early Childhood Direction Center [4] is the ability to identify and understand their own feelings, accurately and read and understand the emotional condition of others, can control the strong emotions and express it in accordance with prevailing norms and ethics, can control self-behaviour, cultivate empathy in others, and can build and maintain a relationship.

Epstein in [11] describes that emotional social development consists of several domains, namely social relationships, self-concept & self-efficacy, self-regulation, as well as emotional and behavioural health. Self-concept is the thoughts and feelings that refer to itself as an individual or perception of himself. Self-efficacy is the belief that a person is able to organize and perform tasks to achieve something. Bong & Sklaavik in [12] whereas self-regulation is an internal and external process carried out in initiation, maintaining, managing emotions, intensity, and emotional expression [13].

There is a previous view that separates emotions and thinking. But according to Immordino-Yang in [6] the

affective and social neuroscientists have expressed a new view of the mind. They reveal that emotions such as anger, fear, happiness, sadness, disgust are a cognitive and psychological process involving the body and mind. Physiologically emotions use the brain system to regulate the body and feel sensations, such as blood pressure, heart rate, and increased breathing when responding to extraordinary emotions. Then emotions affect the brain system in thinking to respond to the situation, such as thinking to escape when experiencing fear.

In a task the development of behaviours that show emotional maturity at age one may be different from the example of success at other ages. As the child develops, a change of development will emerge in his emotional social behaviour. Any change in the development of not only predicts growth will happen next, but also to support each other and develop a structured [1]. The transition from one stage of development to another is not only determined by the task of development, but must be based on the completion of the previous developmental task [14].

III. FACTORS AFFECTING CHILD'S EMOTIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

According to the National Conference of State Legislation (NCSL), emotional social development is influenced by three main factors, namely biological, interaction, and environment. Biological factors include the child's temperaments, and genetic factors. Then the interaction relationship formed with parents, family members, caregivers, friends and others. While environmental factors include environmental conditions around, ranging from toxins, pollution, crime in the environment, economic environment, and other environmental conditions.

A good environment that can support the growth of children can have a positive effect on their development. Conversely, a chaotic environment will inhibit early childhood development [15]. Bobbit & Gershof in [15] also noted the results of the study found that children with the quality of family environment and the school / day care are low have the highest level in problem behaviour and the lowest in prosocial behaviours include acts of sharing, cooperation, helping, honesty, generosity and consider the rights and welfare of others [16]. In contrast, other research results show that children who have good family quality will improve the child's development positively even without regard to the quality of the school environment.

The quality of the environment around the child can be seen in terms of parenting, social interaction, health and environmental hygiene, and economic circumstances. Cooper, *et al.* in [17] suggest that the economic factors of the living environment affect in its emotional social development. Children living in the lower class are more likely to experience behavioural problems than children living in the middle to upper class.

But that does not mean families with economic conditions that are in the middle class to the top apart from the problem. Morris, *et al.* in [13] explains that the characteristics of parents will affect the way of parenting, the emotional climate of the family and the child itself. Based on John Bowlby's statement of child orientation, cognitive and emotional processes, and personality develop not by themselves but in a limited attachment system [17]. Family beliefs look at emotions, closeness of family relationships and

the ability of parents to manage their own emotions affect emotions and socialization in the interactions between parents and children. The results showed that infants at 3 months of age had a harmonious experience, parent / caregiver sensitive to their needs, and had good interactions with parents / caregivers at 9 months of age expressed negative emotions and expressed more positive emotions [19]. While children are often left tends to overcome difficulties emotions because they feel anxious and insecure. But the results of the study show that modern parents are often worried about their children when separated from children so that children are not given independence and their anxiety is transmitted to the child that affects the child's emotional development [5].

In addition to the relationship with parents / caregivers, peers have an important role to be the basis of children's social skills. Relationships with peers are a more complex relationship because new children can have relationships with peers after they have established a good relationship with their parents / caregivers. Their ability to interact with parents will be transferred to their relationships with peers [20]. Furthermore, the teacher's emotional ability also affects the child's emotions. Teachers who are less aware of the will of emotion itself more often reject children's emotions, and cannot soothe negative emotions in children [21]. In the process of teaching and learning in school is not only there is an academic component, but also there are strong social and emotional components, especially in pre-school age children. Children do not learn by yourself, but collaborate with teachers, working together with peers, and supported by the family [22].

From the results of research conducted Zakharova & Silakova in [5] the relationship of parents and children is a special family subsystem that will determine the mental and emotional development of children and also determine how the process of socialization in children. The main characteristic in the parent-child relationship system is affection. Furthermore, in educational institutions of children aged early also an interaction between the child's relationship with the child, and children with a teacher who has a no less important role in children's emotional development and socialization. The main characteristics of the system of relations in educational institutions of children aged early is to understand each other and interact with each other. Martani in [8] explained that the education of children of age early is a form of stimulation which is basically the intervention efforts of creating early childhood environment that stimulates all aspects of child development. The main characteristics of the system of relations with a child in the park childhood or early childhood institutions is a mutual understanding and interaction with each other, taking into account the characteristics and interests of the other children [5].

IV. RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON EMOTIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON ACADEMIC ABILITY

The National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine explains that neuroscience and developmental science research shapes the relationship between children's early experiences and child relationships, and is sustained by the child's ability to manage feelings, impulses, and relationships with others. Furthermore, these developmental

skills will build a close relationship with academic ability [23].

According to Bartlet optimal emotional social development from an early age is generally associated with positive behavioural improvement, better academic achievement, and improved mental health. Social and emotional skills cannot be separated from the child's academic ability. Many studies have proven that emotional social ability in early childhood is related to the child's academic ability in the future and influences the readiness of the child's school [24], [25]. Emotional social skills include positive interaction with the teacher, a positive representation of the event of the attachment relationship, emotional knowledge, emotional regulatory ability, and social ability of the child can be used as a predictor of the child's academic success even when other factors such as the student's early academic ability are taken into account [26], [24]. The results of the study from Nadem, *et al.* in [24] show that there is a reciprocal relationship between emotional social ability and academic ability. Children with lower emotional social competence are less likely to get high academic grades and children with low academic ability have difficulty in their emotional social abilities. Denham in [26] explains that children with emotional social problems tend to have potential problems in their lives, difficulty adjusting to school, experiencing academic difficulties, and tend to misbehave potentially drug abuse. Children with good emotional social skills at the start of school will be preferred by their friends, able to start and maintain a new friendship, be able to make positive relationships with teachers, have positive feelings toward school, and actively participate in the class [26].

V. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) according to Collaborative Academic, Social, Emotional Learning (CASEL) a leading body in emotional social development is a process for acquiring skills in recognizing and managing emotions well, building care and caring for others, building positive relationships, responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations well. The SEL framework is an integrated approach that involves all students, families, all school staff, and the community. CELL demonstrates a systematic process to improve the emotional social development of children are the common elements within the school. The CELLS can increase academic success, improve the quality of relationships between teachers and students, and decrease the behaviour of troubled children. The SEL includes a set of skills consisting of emotional processes, social and interpersonal skills, and cognitive regulation [23].

It is now beginning to grow that the SEL is just as important even more important than the academic ability of early childhood education in determining school readiness. The emotional social aspect becomes more important because it not only affects the school's success but also in the development of the child as an individual and a social being [11].

The results of a recent study suggest that children with CELL insulin show an improvement in positive skills, attitudes and social behaviours, reduce the causes of problems, decrease emotional distress levels, and significantly improve academic ability [27]. The SEL

described by CASEL develops five sets of core competencies in the context of security, care, good governance, academic excellence, and engaging the learning environment. There are three main aspects as inputs in the child's emotional social competence, first, the community context, including family or neighbours, school areas, and government policies. Second, classroom conditions and school cover, school culture, classroom climate, SEL instructions, and social norms. Third, the teacher's background includes emotional social competence and pedagogic ability [23]. These three things will affect the process of forming five sets of aspects in the SEL that include:

- Self-awareness, self-awareness, can accurately assess or be aware of feelings, interests, values, strengths to maintain good confidence,
- Self-management, self-control among others by controlling emotions to cope with stress, express emotions appropriately, control impulse, persistent in facing challenges.
- Social awareness, the ability to assume the perspective of others and have empathy, recognize and appreciate the similarities and differences of individuals and groups, recognize roles and perform active roles as members of family, school, and community.
- Relationship skills, the ability to be able to build and maintain a relationship, persist from inappropriate social pressures, prevent, manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts, provide assistance when needed. In children can begin with a child can start to play, start and maintain conversations, listen to friends, take turns, work together in groups, can convey desire with attention [10].
- Responsible decision making, making decisions based on accepted ethical standards, norms and cultures, respecting others, applying decision-making skills to academic and social aspects [28], [10], [27], [29].

By developing these five competencies the child is expected to be successful in living his life in the future [28]. In addition the child is expected to have mental health, positive habit behaviour, and achieve academic success as long term results [23]. While the short-term goal of the SEL program is to improve the social ability of the emotional and positive attitude of the child so that the child can improve the academic ability that is reflected in positive behaviour, less problem, and stress, and better ranking and achievement score [27], [28].

Teachers as the main actors in the classroom setting have the opportunity to influence the positive development of children not only through the content in each instruction but also how teachers and children manage behaviour, and become models in social and emotional processes.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The curriculum standard for emotional social development is to build positive interactions with others, be it adults and peers, recognize and name feelings that arise, regulate emotions, behaviours, and self-interest, build feelings of competence and positive attitude in learning, resolve conflict, and build empathy. In preparing the SEL standard framework, all representatives of the parties involved such as teachers, school staff, parents, professional services, and

others that influence the emotional social development of children jointly develop objectives, standards, assessment standards, and descriptions of activities [27].

Before the SEL program framework is compiled, teachers and school staff collect data on students' emotional social circumstances through surveys using a rating scale or by interviewing. What should be noted from the results of these data is to categorize the value based on differences in student groups, for example groups of students who have disabilities will have social circumstances that are different from normal children. Next notice the tendency of emotional social circumstances over time, whether decreased, increased or fixed. Lastly by connecting data with other school data [27].

DeMeulenaere in [30] describes how to guide the child's emotional social development by first creating a safe and supportive environment. Research shows that schools should provide a safe and supportive environment to improve the soft skill or noncognitive skills necessary for future success and higher education [27]. Creating a safe environment includes classroom settings clean, good light and air-conditioning arrangements, comfortable classroom setup and support for calm children's activities but can also accommodate child's mobility safely. In addition, a good relationship between teachers and children so that children feel safe and comfortable.

Second, focus on the feeling of the child, the SEL helps the child to recognize his or her feelings first and then others. Teachers and parents as a socializer should provide experiences that can improve the child's developmental process by helping the child to understand and manage the emotions of the child, expressing and mentioning what they feel, after the child understands his feelings then the child can understand the feelings of others so that there can be feelings of empathy in children, teachers and parents become good models for children, respond to children's emotions, and use positive emotions to support learning [29].

Third is to help the child in developing the language, the teacher must be able to understand and develop the language of the child because the language is also an important factor in the SEL, without good language skills the child will be difficult to express his feelings and difficult to socialize with others. According to DeMeulenaere in [30], the development of the brain, memory, and language are factors that contribute to the child's understanding and control of their emotions. The principle of SEL is sustainable, connected with academic aspects, prominent relationships, cultural importance and environmental climate [21]. The SEL will effectively enhance the program by combining four key elements, including:

- Aligning a series of activities that connect with various skills.
- Provide an active form of learning.
- Focus on developing one or more social skills
- Target specific skills [22], [23].

There are three main domains of emotional social development outlined in the California Preschool Learning Foundation :

- Self, self-related behaviours, including self-awareness, self-regulation, the understanding will

be social and emotional, empathetic and caring, and initiative in learning.

- Social interaction is behaviour related to other person that is interaction between adult and peer, participate in group, and cooperative also responsible
- Relationships relate to bonding, such as attachments with parents, close relationships with teachers, caregivers, and friends.

In the context of the school the SEL program combines two sets of strategies, first by involving the use of instruction in processing, integrating, and selectively applying emotional social capabilities in accordance with development, context, and culture. Both SEL programs are conducted through the establishment of a safe and attentive environment involving peer and family initiatives, improving classroom management and teacher teaching quality, building on activities created by all members of the school community [22].

In the framework of the Early Years Learning Framework also describes three things that must be developed to support social and emotional components. First, the environment must be developed for a safe place; second, the program is developed in accordance with emotional social development so that aspects of learning are focused individually. It can enable students' interest and their own emotional social needs while for practitioners can be more responsive to the needs of the child. Third, access the input and support of counselling services (Griffiths-Chandran).

Social Emotional Assessment of emotional learning can be done with various variations, namely by providing direct assessment to children, or to adults who know about children. For that communication between parents and teachers should always awake to do the assessment of children or inform the development. Communication can be made through telephones, home visits, or with a liaison [27]

Implications of the SEL program and policy of integrating with the school are by making the SEL instruction as a routine activity conducted in the classroom and at school, training all teachers and staff, compiling the SEL standards and assessments, and expanding the network to collaborate [23].

VII. CONCLUSION

Social emotional development is one aspect of development that is not independent, but also work together and affect each other aspects. Social Emotional Learning can help children develop their ability to understand themselves, others, can socialize with others, and can make the right decisions so as to equip the child to be able to adapt to the community environment. Social Emotional Learning Program has a long-term goal for children to live well and achieve success in the future, and short-term goals are to prepare children to study at the next level, improve emotional social skills, and behave well, and earn better academic achievement.

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