

Social Emotional Learning in Elementary School: Implementation and Challenges

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Abstract. Social emotional learning needs to be implemented in every stage of learning activities in the classroom, especially in elementary schools. This study describes (1) teachers' perceptions of social emotional learning, (2) implementation, and (3) barriers to implementation of social emotional learning. This study used descriptive quantitative method with survey technique involving 93 elementary school teachers in Madura Island area. The data collection technique used a questionnaire. The findings of this study show that: (1) teachers have a good perception of social emotional learning in elementary schools based on a survey of 70.86%. (2) the implementation of social emotional learning obtained 62.80% with sufficient category (3) during the process of implementing social emotional learning teachers have high challenges of 70.22%. The results obtained indicate that social emotional learning can and has been implemented in elementary schools with high challenges during the implementation process.

Keywords: challenges, elementary school, implementation, social emotional learning.

1 Introduction

Developing student's social and emotional intelligence is the aim of social emotional learning. Learning to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and act sympathetically toward others, build and maintain positive relationships, and make moral decisions in life are all components of social emotional learning [1]. Social emotional learning (SEL) is defined as the capacity to precisely identify and control one's own emotions, enhance one's capacity for problem-solving, and cultivate positive interpersonal interactions [2]. One of the fundamental pillars of character education in the curriculum is social emotional learning as a process and skill.

Students' SEL is closely related to their social-emotional skills. Some examples of these socio-emotional elements are self-efficacy, growth mindset, self-management, and social awareness [3]. Self-management is the ability to effectively regulate one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in a range of situations. It is sometimes referred to as self-control or self-regulation. The idea that one may improve their skills with work is known as a growth mindset. The belief that one can effectively complete goals or attain results is known as

self-efficacy. The capacity to understand and sympathize with others from all origins and cultures, to recognize resources and supports in the family, school, and community, and to comprehend social and ethical rules for behavior are all components of social awareness.

SEL is a component of WHO-aligned life skills education, which includes self-awareness, empathy, emotion control, cooperation, and problem-solving abilities [4]. Since the significance of non-academic factors in long-term success is becoming increasingly recognized, the development of students' social and emotional abilities has taken center stage in the field of education. Students who possess strong social and emotional competencies are more likely to succeed in both academic and personal contexts [5].

The principles and objectives of SEL are in line with the concept of the Merdeka curriculum currently implemented in Indonesia. The philosophy of the Merdeka curriculum is to provide liberating education, in the sense that it is impartial and student-centered. SEL plays a very important role in liberating education because it contains the skills that students must have to survive in the face of problems, the ability to find solutions and also how to be a good person [6]. The Merdeka curriculum policy prioritizes the learning process in accordance with students' interests and characters [7]. This policy provides space for the implementation of social emotional learning.

Since students' morals and character are deteriorating, one of the biggest worries nowadays is the introduction of SEL in schools. In light of this, it is imperative that SEL be incorporated into the curriculum, particularly starting with elementary school. Students' self-regulation abilities and emotional control, including their empathy, discipline, responsibility, and perspective, are positively impacted by the use of social emotional learning [8][9]. Students of all ages and skill levels can benefit from social emotional learning when it is properly applied in terms of their academic success, social skills, and mental health [10][11][12].

Examining the opinions of educators regarding the use of SEL in elementary schools is essential. Importantly, this study would offer factual data regarding the degree of SEL implementation in Madura Island area elementary schools. Thus, this study investigates how instructors perceive, use, and deal with SEL in elementary school classrooms. The purpose of this study is to (1) describe the perceptions of teachers, (2) implement social emotional learning, and (3) identify barriers to implementation.

2 Research Method

The descriptive quantitative method was applied in this research. Research that necessitates the use of numbers, from data collection and interpretation to the presentation of the findings, is known as quantitative research [13]. Survey methods are used in this quantitative study, and questionnaires are the primary tool used to collect data. Syahrizal and Jailani [14] argues that in order to determine relative events, distributions, and correlations between variables, survey research can be conducted on both large and small populations. Survey techniques are focused on obtaining and analyzing data from samples collected from the population. The data in this study were obtained from the results of questionnaires given to elementary school teachers. The subjects of this study were 93 elementary school teachers in Madura Island area. The questionnaire used a Likert scale (1-5) and was developed based on the indicators of the objectives of this study, namely the implementation and challenges of SEL. The indicators in this questionnaire are presented in the following table 1.

Tabel 1. SEL Implementation and Challenges Questionnaire

| No | Indicators | Statement |
|----|--|---|
| A | Teacher perceptions of social emotional learning | 1.I have understood the concept of SEL |
| | | 2.I have attended training related to SEL |
| | | 3.I found the training helpful in understanding SEL |
| | | 4.I feel that the implementation of SEL training is important |
| B | Implementation process of social emotional learning | 1.I have integrated SEL in the classroom |
| | | 2.I always design learning activities that integrate SEL |
| | | 3.I have conducted assessments that integrate social-emotional aspects |
| | | 4.I have adapted the implementation of SEL to the independent curriculum |
| C | Implementation challenges of social emotional learning | 1.I find it difficult to find the right time to integrate SEL in the classroom (time) |
| | | 2.I find it difficult to design learning activities with SEL (pedagogic) |
| | | 3.I feel students are not cooperative during the implementation of SEL (pedagogic) |
| | | 4.I feel that the support from the school for the implementation of SEL is still lacking (facilities) |
| | | 5.The effectiveness of SEL programs is difficult to measure objectively (pedagogic) |
| | | 6.Students do not understand the benefits of implementing SEL (technical) |
| | | 7.Lack of support from parents/guardians for the sustainability of the SEL program (technical) |
| | | 8.Lack of coordination between teachers to equalize perceptions regarding the implementation of SEL (pedagogic) |

Descriptive statistics followed by being used as the data analysis method in this investigation. The reason descriptive statistics are utilized is that they examine data by characterizing or characterizing the obtained data without drawing generalizable conclusions [15]. The data that has been converted into percentage data is then interpreted according to the score interpretation criteria in table 2 below.

Table 2. Score Interpretation Criteria

| Range of Scores | Criteria |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| $84\% \leq S \leq 100\%$ | Excellent / Very High |
| $68\% \leq S < 84\%$ | Good / High |
| $52\% \leq S < 68\%$ | Sufficient |
| $36\% \leq S < 52\%$ | Poor / Low |

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| $20\% \leq S < 36\%$ | Very Poor / Very Low |
|----------------------|----------------------|

3 Result And Discussion

3.1 Teacher Perceptions of SEL

Teachers' perceptions of SEL were obtained through a questionnaire with 4 statement indicators. The results obtained are presented in figure 1 below.

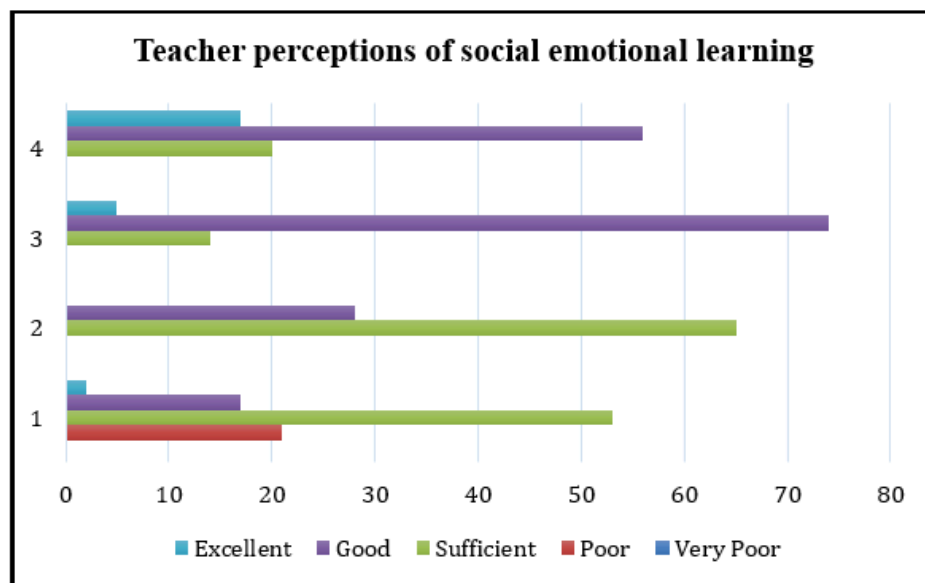


Figure 1. Result of teacher perception questionnaire on SEL

The average acquisition of each indicator on the aspect of teacher perception is presented in Figure 2 below.

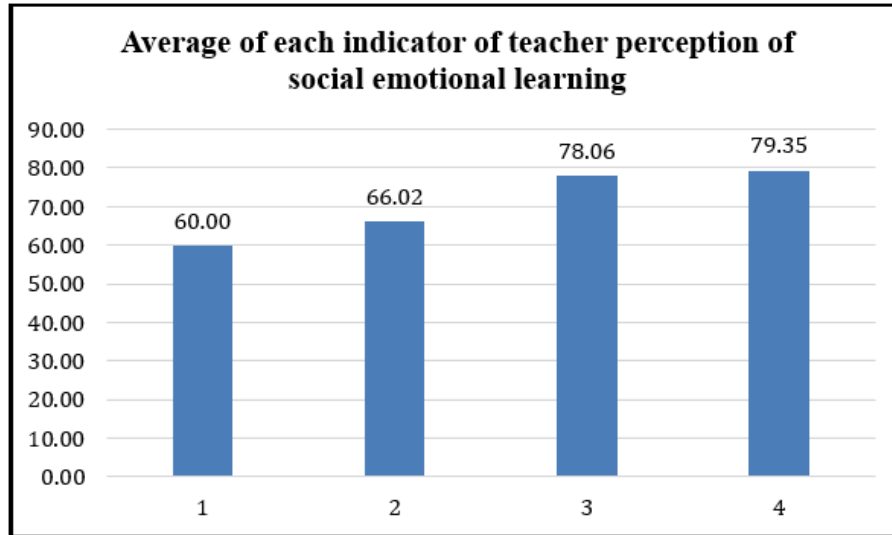


Figure 2. Average teacher perception questionnaire on SEL

According to the results of the questionnaire, 60% of teachers have an understanding of SEL, 66.02% have taken part in SEL training, 78.06% believe the training has improved their understanding of SEL, and 79.35% think it is crucial to hold SEL training. These findings indicate that the average teacher perception falls into the good category at 70.86%. The effectiveness of SEL in the classroom is determined by the teachers' self-development and understanding gained from training exercises. Promoting SEL in the classroom is largely the responsibility of teachers [16]. According to humanitarian principles, the teacher's job is to facilitate learning by making things convenient for students and guiding them while also attending to their social and emotional growth [17]. Teachers' understanding is very important in order to determine the right learning methods and approaches for their students' needs [18]. Teachers' comprehension of how to use SEL has improved as a result of the training they have received. To help instructors overcome the difficulties of adopting SEL, ongoing professional development is crucial [19]. It is anticipated that the training will raise teachers' awareness and comprehension of the value of SEL and school culture reforms to establish a more welcoming, secure, and encouraging environment for students' overall development [20].

3.2 Implementation Process of SEL

The results of the questionnaire on the implementation of SEL are presented in figure 3 below.

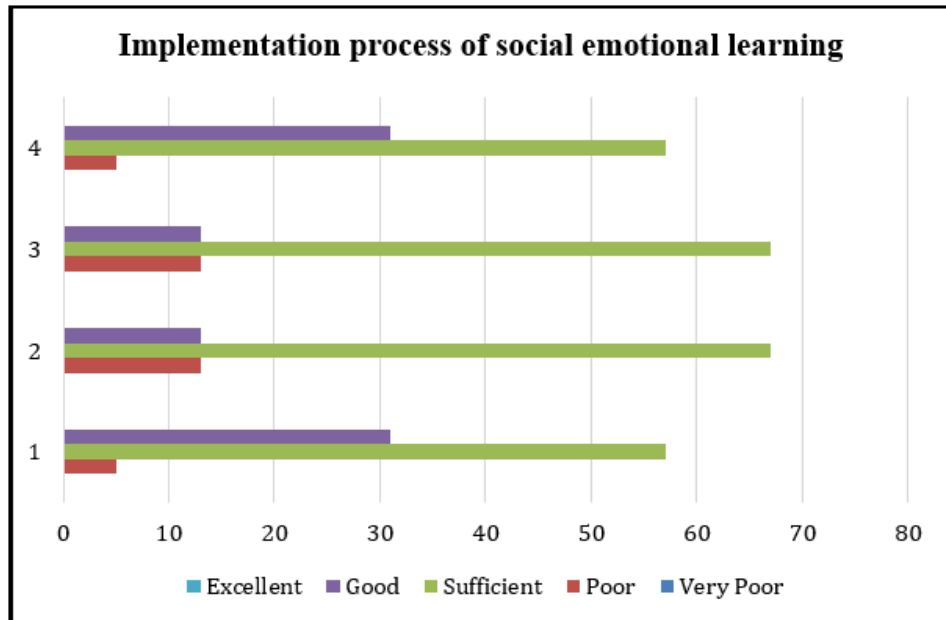


Figure 3. Implementation of SEL

The average acquisition of each indicator on the aspect of implementation SEL is presented in Figure 4 below.

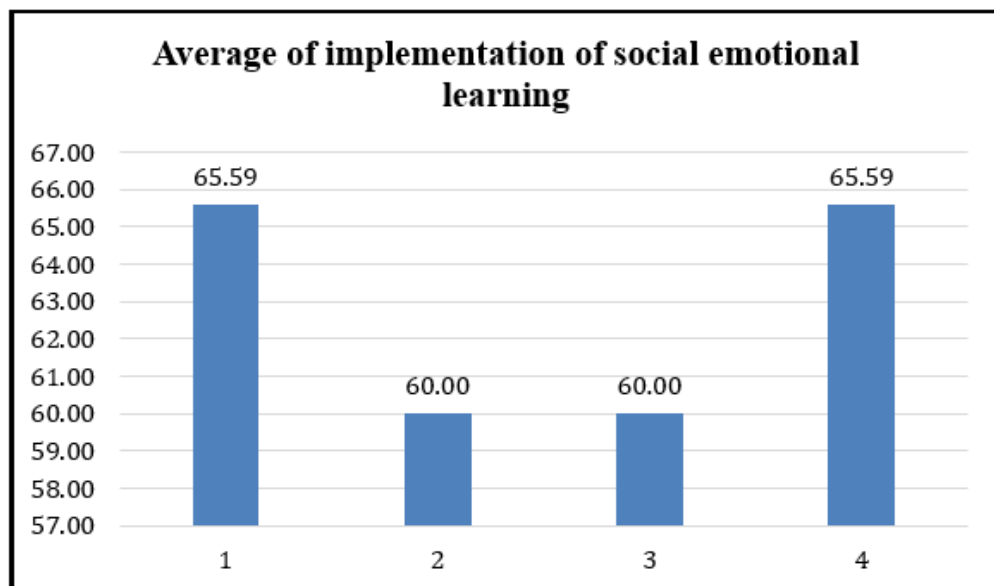


Figure 4. Average of implementation SEL

According to the results of the survey, 65.59% of teachers have incorporated SEL into their lessons, 60% consistently create learning activities that incorporate SEL, 60% have carried out assessments that incorporate social and emotional elements, and 65.59% have modified their use of the Merdeka curriculum. These findings indicate that SEL is implemented on average at a rate of 62.80%, which falls into the sufficient group. The majority of teachers have tried to implement SEL in cross-subject classes. However, the questionnaire results show that the majority of teachers feel that they have not implemented it well. The successful implementation of SEL depends on careful initial planning, adaptation to changing contexts, and active involvement of all school elements including stakeholders [8]. Given the obvious goal of SEL, the production of instructional materials is a crucial step. Students are supposed to study social-emotional skills in order to facilitate their application in daily life. This is why SEL is being implemented in schools [21].

3.3 Implementation Challenges of SEL

Teachers' challenges in implementing SEL are presented in Figure 5 below.

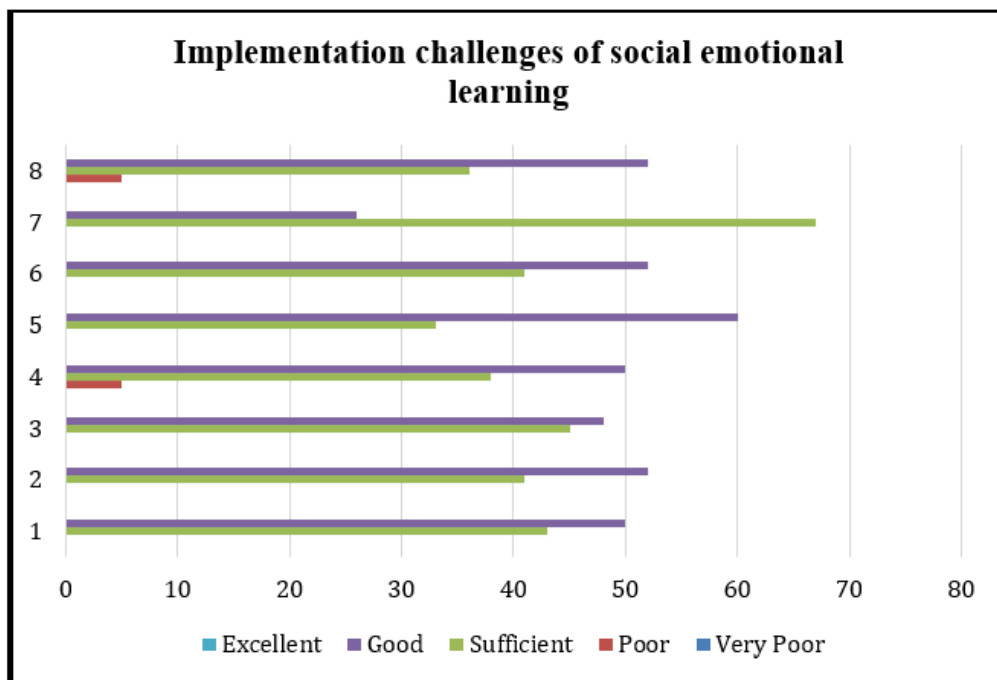


Figure 5. Challenges of SEL

The average acquisition of each indicator on the aspect of challenges SEL is presented in Figure 6 below.

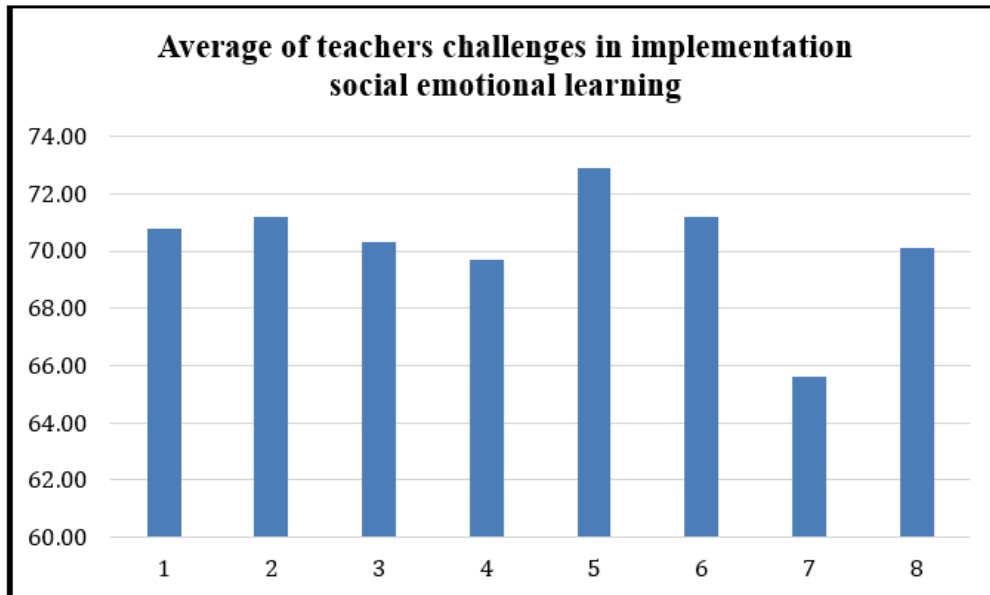


Figure 6. Average of teacher challenges in implementation SEL

The questionnaire results showed that 70.75% of teachers found it difficult to find time to implement SEL, 71.18% found it difficult to design SEL activities, 70.32% found students uncooperative, 69.68% found lack of support from the school, 72.90% found it difficult to measure the effectiveness of SEL, 71.18% found students did not understand the benefits of implementing SEL, 65.59% found lack of support from parents for the sustainability of the program, and 70.11% found lack of coordination between teachers. According to the questionnaire results, the difficulties of putting SEL into practice obtained an average score of 70.22%, placing it in the high category. Teachers' problems can be divided into four categories: time, pedagogy, facilities, and techniques.

Lack of preparation, lack of professional development, and lack of time are common barriers teachers encounter when integrating SEL [22][23]. In addition, support from school policy makers and parents, including the availability of adequate facilities are challenges faced in implementing SEL. Rohmawati [24] argues that the success of the SEL program is shown by the collaborative support from school policies, practitioners, parents, and the community.

4 Conclusion

Based on a survey, the study's findings indicate that: (1) 70,86% teachers have a good perception of SEL in elementary schools, (2) the implementation of SEL obtained 62.80% with sufficient category (3) during the process of implementing SEL teachers have high challenges of 70.22%. Depending to the study's findings, SEL can and has been used in elementary schools in the Madura Island region.

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